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REPORT
BY THE
Select Committee of the House of Lords
ON THE
**PREVENTION OF
ROAD ACCIDENTS**
[SESSION 1938-39]

*Ordered by The House of Lords to be Printed
29th March, 1939*

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REPORT

BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON THE PREVENTION OF ROAD ACCIDENTS [SESSION 1938-39]

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

REPORT

By the Select Committee appointed to consider what steps should be taken to reduce the Number of Casualties on the Roads

ORDERED TO REPORT:—

That the Committee have met and considered the evidence taken last session by the Select Committee on the Prevention of Road Accidents. That Committee was appointed as the result of a debate initiated in the House of Lords* on a motion by the Bishop of Winchester, in which he asked that there should be laid before the House papers relating to the continued high rate of casualties on the roads. Lord Newton moved an amendment to the effect that a Select Committee should be appointed "to consider what steps should be taken to reduce the number of casualties on the roads". This amendment was agreed to, and the Committee was nominated accordingly.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Evidence.

I. The original Committee devoted the spring and summer of 1938 to the hearing and sifting of evidence, which covers some 600 pages of print. In addition to hearing the Ministry of Transport on two occasions, they examined witnesses from the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police, the Chief Constables' Association, Local Government Associations, the Education Authorities of England and Scotland, the Coroners' Society, and various Government bodies. Evidence was also given to the Committee by four Members of each House of Parliament, by several private individuals, and by representatives of many interests, such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, motor cyclists, motor manufacturers, engineering bodies, various societies formed to reduce road accidents, and others, which cannot be set out in detail, but which will be found in the published Minutes of evidence. Many other persons and bodies submitted letters and memoranda to the Committee, which were of assistance to them in their deliberations.

H.L. 192
Session
1937-8.

To all these Departments, organizations, and individuals the Committee desire to offer their thanks for the time and trouble which they expended in preparing and tendering to the Committee the evidence—oral and documentary—which they have had the advantage of considering.

* H.L. Parliamentary Debates (8.12.37).

Appointment of present Committee.

2. When Parliament adjourned at the end of July 1938 the Committee made a report to the effect that they had been unable to complete their task, and they recommended in consequence that they should be re-appointed in the forthcoming session in order that they might do so. The Proceedings of the Committee, and the Minutes of Evidence, were then published, and the new Committee was appointed at the commencement of this session in order to make this report. The evidence taken by the former Committee was referred to it. The new Committee subsequently heard evidence from the Chairman of Committees, and they also heard Lord Cottenham and the Chief Constable of Lancashire on the subject of the Mobile Police. They were also addressed by Lord Eltisley, Lord Sandhurst and Lord Teynham on behalf of the House of Lords Road Group.

H.L. 192
Session
1937-8.

GENERAL.

Drastic remedies needed.

3. The Committee realised early in their deliberations that there is no single or sovereign remedy for the solution of the problem submitted to them. They also appreciated that the remedies to be recommended by them would have to be, if not dramatic, at any rate drastic in their character, having regard not only to the existing magnitude of the evil but also to the steady annual increase of motor vehicles using the roads. In other words, though they were satisfied that there is no panacea for the mischief, the Committee were also satisfied that they must seek and, if possible, find a long range policy.

Organisation of the Ministry of Transport.

4. The Committee appreciate that, in the recommendations they are about to record, will be found many which will tend to place increased control in the hands of the Ministry of Transport. The Committee were not impressed by the evidence which they heard from its representatives regarding the organisation and working of the Department so far as road accidents and road construction are concerned. The Committee formed an impression that there is, in these matters, a lack of vision, of initiative, and of driving force in the Department. At the same time, it is proper to add that the difficulties of the Ministry are often increased by the necessity of securing the concurrence of a large number of local authorities to projected road improvements.

Endorsement of many of the remedies suggested in evidence.

5. The Committee have adopted and endorsed a number of the recommendations which were made to them. Many of these recommendations are obvious, and indeed are in accord with common sense. There is little doubt, however, that, in some cases, the authorities concerned will say, and say with truth, that they are in complete accord with the recommendations of the Committee, and that they would long ago have carried them into effect if they had had sufficient funds and powers to enable them to do so. Several of the recommendations made have in fact already been adopted in certain places. Some authorities may also affirm that they cannot unceasingly increase their rates for the benefit of one section of the community, viz., the users of motor cars. In the opinion of the Committee, however, there is no one, apart from those who are confined indoors by illness or some other cause, who is not vitally affected by the safety of the roads. This is specially so in the case of pedestrians and cyclists. It should be remembered that only 7·8 per cent. of the persons killed and injured on the roads in the year 1936-7—excluding motor cyclists—were motor drivers.

Previous recommendations often not acted on.

6. The Committee also realise that many of their recommendations have already been made by other Committees; but that is no reason why these recommendations should not be endorsed by them, for all too few of the recommendations made by Committees in the past have been acted upon. In this connection the Committee would draw attention to the fact that, although certain progress has been made as a result of the publication of the Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among school children, with whose recommendations they find themselves in agreement, little has been done with regard to the recommendations of the corresponding Inter-Departmental Committee for England and Wales. The Committee find themselves in agreement with the recommendations of that Report also, and they were concerned to find that more progress had not been made as a result of it, under the direction of the Board of Education and the Ministry of Transport. The Committee consider that the education of school children in road safety is one of the most important of the remedies which they are about to propose. After all, school children are the motorists, cyclists and pedestrians of the future.

Cost and method of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee.

7. The Committee have not carefully considered the question of the cost of giving effect to their recommendations, nor have they attempted to advise whether these should receive effect by

means of legislation or by regulation or by special order. The Committee are respectfully of opinion that it is for His Majesty's Government, and for the Local Authorities concerned, to decide on the priority which should be given to these recommendations, if adopted, having regard to the amount of money available for the reduction of road casualties. It is evident that some of the Committee's recommendations can receive effect at a small cost, while others are so expensive that it is not possible for the Committee to ask Parliament to insist on their being carried out at once. It is, however, manifest that roads which were originally designed for horse traffic have not been improved and widened in proportion to the increase in motor traffic, and it is of vital importance that further Treasury grants should be made available for this purpose. The Committee were informed that in the year 1936-7 £75,406,000 was paid into the Exchequer from the Motor Fuel Tax and Motor Vehicle and Driving Licence Receipts, but of this gigantic sum £22,177,000 only was spent on roads by the Ministry of Transport.* The Committee regret that the idea of a self-balancing Road Fund, initiated so that there should be a Fund available to keep abreast of the increase in motor cars, has been abandoned, and that the Road Fund was merged in the Exchequer. While they consider that a return to the original principle would be a counsel of perfection, so far as roads are concerned, they realise that at this moment there are other urgent claims on the Treasury. There is another item in the balance sheet however which the Committee consider the Treasury should take into account, and that is human life. Roads should be made fool-proof, in so far as that is possible. Men, being subject to human frailty, are apt to do many foolish things, but that is all the more reason why the maximum precautions should be taken to guard against that element, and to protect the victims from the consequences of those mistakes.

Detailed recommendations for new roads outside Committee's Terms of Reference.

8. The Committee do not propose to make definite recommendations regarding the new roads which should be constructed. That would not come within their terms of reference. They would, however, point out that, the more new roads on modern lines which are constructed, the more the congestion on old roads will be relieved, and the number of accidents, it is hoped, will diminish.

* In addition, £9,220,000 was allocated to loan charge, and £36,351,000 was spent by local authorities out of their own rates. Further sums were also spent by the County of London and by other of the larger local authorities out of the Block Grants which they receive direct from the Treasury.

The problem of Roads versus Railways also outside Committee's Terms of Reference.

9. The Committee realise that, with the improvement of the road system, a problem will arise regarding the expediency or otherwise of giving the Railways some protection against the growing rivalry of the roads. This is, however, another question which the Committee do not regard as falling within their terms of reference.

Education of Road Users essential.

10. The Committee consider that the education and control of all road users—pedestrians, cyclists, motor cyclists and motor drivers—call for drastic action. They will later make suggestions for a continuous campaign which should be projected year by year—every type of propaganda being employed. Amongst these will be advertisement, wireless talks, cinema displays, and the education of the public and of children by police instruction. Finally, where education breaks down, and road users are criminally careless, more stringent regulations for their control will be suggested. Qs. 1509-19.
Q. 5673.

Necessity for road improvement.

11. The Committee have been impressed from the outset by the urgent necessity of inaugurating without delay a long range policy of road improvement. The Minister of Transport recently stated in the House of Commons* that the number of motor cars in Great Britain is increasing by about 1,000 every day, and the Committee are of opinion therefore that, within the next decade, a total may be reached which the roads of the country will be quite unable to carry. Even to-day the roads are quite unfitted to cope with the maelstrom of mixed traffic which is to be found on the more important thoroughfares. Since 1910 the number of vehicles on the roads has increased over 2,000 per cent., and in addition there has been a marked increase of mileage run per vehicle. The increase in new road construction, however, so far as can be estimated, is only about 2 per cent. during the same period. Q. 2777.

Perfection of vehicles should be aimed at.

12. The Committee will also make recommendations regarding defective road vehicles. This problem is of less urgency either than the education and control of road users or road improvement; for the motor trade, being competitive, addresses itself unceasingly to the improvement and perfection of motor vehicles. It is principally where antiquated and unserviceable vehicles are retained on the road, or where new fashions are

* H.C. Parliamentary Debates, Column 935. (16/11/38.)

Qs. 773-4. introduced for the sake of appearance only—such as danger-
 Q. 3836. ously large doors or low driving seats—that the Committee
 Qs. 6177-9. consider interference to be necessary.

Division of the problem.

13. In the foregoing paragraphs the Committee have endeavoured to set out the conditions under which they were appointed, and the problems which they had to examine. They propose now to consider shortly the disease—which is, alas, only too obvious—and they will then suggest remedies. The problem falls into three parts:—

(1) How all users of the road can be educated so as to reduce errors of judgment and thoughtlessness to a minimum, and how active offenders can be more effectively dealt with.

(2) How roads can be so improved and traffic so segregated that accidents may be reduced in number.

(3) How vehicles can be improved so as to eliminate their defectiveness as a cause of accidents.

In dealing with remedies, overlapping is unavoidable, for it is not possible completely to compartment these various lines of inquiry.

THE DISEASE.

Apathy of the public.

Q. 3292. 14. During the year 1936-37, there were in Great Britain 199,062 accidents on the roads involving injury, of which 6,337 were fatal accidents. These figures are staggering, and speak for themselves. Nevertheless the Committee are amazed at the apathy with which they are received by the public to-day. It is true that a number of societies have been formed with the object of alleviating the evil, but, generally speaking, too little attention has been paid to the means whereby it can be remedied or at any rate abated.

Ministry of Transport statistics.

15. It is essential, before considering preventive or alleviating remedies, to consider the extent and nature of the disease. The Committee recommend a study of the report of the Ministry of Transport on road accidents in Great Britain involving personal injury during the year 1936-37. This report gives a more complete analysis of accidents causing injuries as well as fatalities than do the reports of former years or the report for the year 1937-8. From an examination of the report for the year 1936-7 the following salient figures emerge:—

(a) The sole or main causes of accidents assigned by Chief Constables are as follow:—

Number of Accidents attributed to.	Fatal Accidents.		Non-Fatal Accidents.		All Accidents.	
	No.	Per cent. of total.	No.	Per cent. of total.	No.	Per cent. of total.
Drivers	1,275	20·1	47,166	24·4	48,443	24·3
Motor cyclists ...	849	13·4	17,692	9·2	18,539	9·3
Pedal cyclists ...	1,051	16·6	44,317	23·0	45,368	22·8
Pedestrians ...	2,470	39·0	58,145	30·2	60,615	30·5
Other persons (attendants, pas- sengers, etc.) ...	133	2·1	5,517	2·9	5,650	2·8
Vehicles or equip- ment	206	3·3	6,940	3·6	7,146	3·6
Miscellaneous causes (road-way, weather, etc.)	218	3·4	11,278	5·8	11,496	5·8
Causes not trace- able	135	2·1	1,670	0·9	1,805	0·9
Total ...	6,337	100·0	192,725	100·0	199,062	100·0

(b) There were 575 fatal accidents—vizt., 9·1 per cent. of the total fatal accidents—in which no mechanically propelled vehicle was involved.

(c) Of 3,057 pedestrians killed, 26·2 per cent. were under 11 years, and 41·9 per cent. were over 60 years old. In other words, only 31·9 per cent. were between 11 and 60 years old, although that age group represents about 70 per cent. of the total population.

(d) Sixty per cent. or thereby of the fatal and 76 per cent. or thereby of the non-fatal accidents occurred on roads subject to a speed limit of 30 m.p.h.

(e) In the Ministry's attribution of fatal accidents to drivers other than pedal cyclists, 22·5 per cent. were due to excessive speed.

(f) The fatal accidents attributed to drivers other than pedal cyclists were assigned to the drivers of the following vehicles:—

Private motor vehicles	868*
Motor cycles	868*
Motor vans, lorries, etc.	333
Public conveyances	92
Other mechanically propelled vehicles	27
Miscellaneous, including horse-drawn vehicles	13
				<hr/> 2,201 <hr/>

* This coincidence is remarkable when it is remembered that, roughly speaking, the proportion of motor cycles to private motor cars licensed in 1936-7 was as one to four.

Basis of Ministry's attribution of responsibility for accidents.

16. The number of accidents under these various headings is impressive and alarming, and the totals cannot be refuted; but the Committee are unable to accept the conclusions of the Ministry regarding the causes to which these accidents are attributed, for the following reasons:—

(1) Only one cause has been assigned for each accident, and, although it is true that most accidents have an immediate or proximate cause, it cannot be affirmed with certainty that the blame should not often be distributed in varying proportion between road conditions, the road user, the vehicle, or both parties involved in a collision.

Q. 2239.

(2) In the case of fatal accidents the police necessarily have to rely on the evidence of the survivors only, or of such witnesses, if any, as come forward.

(3) The system of police reports on road accidents is often inadequate.

(4) Vehicles are frequently destroyed so completely that it is impossible after an accident to tell whether they were defective or not.

(5) The general principle on which the Ministry of Transport proceeds is that, even if the condition of the roads and cars was unimpeachable, the total of accidents would not be appreciably affected. The Committee cannot accept this view.

Qs. 39,
7500.

THE REMEDY

PART I

ROAD USERS

1. General

Segregation must come.

17. It is manifest that, though defects in the road system, which will be dealt with in Part II of the Report, are important contributory causes of accident, the elimination of which would enormously reduce road fatalities, the human factor is of supreme importance. It is the belief of the Committee that segregation of drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians on the main roads must come, and that the attainment of this ideal is essential if road safety is to be ensured. Owing, however, to many obstacles, the chief of which is that the cost of segregation would be almost prohibitive, this ideal cannot be attained for many years. In the meantime much can be done to reduce the toll of the roads, and to lay the foundations of ultimate segregation of road users.

Respective rights of road users.

18. At present all road users have an equal right to the King's Highway. The obligations of drivers of vehicles are obvious, and are to a large extent defined. It would seem, however, that many pedestrians are unwilling to sacrifice any of their rights to the common cause of safety. They would complain, and with justification, if motor bicycles were permitted to endanger their safety by using footpaths, but, although they frequently imperil themselves and other road users by their conduct, they do not seem disposed voluntarily to relinquish or even to modify their right to the carriageway. The representatives of the Pedestrians' Association who appeared before the Committee gave the impression that they feared that the exercise of more caution on their part, and the cession of reasonably free passage to fast-moving traffic, would involve an abandonment of their fundamental rights. Yet it is surely logical that, where pavements or footpaths exist, vehicles should have a prior right to the carriageway, provided that reasonable and safe facilities are given to pedestrians to cross it. This reasoning applies equally to cyclists, and is the genesis of the recommendations of the Committee with regard to the compulsory use of cycle tracks, footpaths, and, to a limited extent, pedestrian crossings, which are recorded later in this report. Qs. 3542-6

Highway Code.

19. The Preface to the " Highway Code " says: " Respect for the Code and for the spirit underlying it is so much a moral duty that its practice should become a habit and its breach a reproach." Yet many road users break the rules of the Code day after day, without conscience and without remorse, and indeed they not infrequently boast that they break them. Against such people the full strength of the law must be ranged. If the correction and punishment of this attitude afforded a solution of the problem, so far as road users are concerned, the task of the Committee would be easy. The majority of accidents, however, are not the result of grave faults of behaviour, nor are they due to recklessness. They are due rather to inattention and to errors of judgment.

The Committee are of opinion that the Highway Code should be revised, and that it should be given the force of law. At present the failure to observe its provisions does not in itself render a person liable to legal proceedings, although the infringement of its provisions may be relied on as evidence in any proceedings which may follow.

Each type of road user should be familiar with the contents of the Code. The Committee consider therefore that the Highway Code should be presented in three separate forms, a form being arranged for the driver, the cyclist and the pedestrian respectively. The Committee believe that more attention would be paid to the Code by each class of road user, if it were specially prepared for him. At present, while realising that the information in the existing Code may be useful, many pedestrians are inclined to throw it aside as not concerning them, if, on glancing inside, they see a series of instructions as to how one motor driver should signal to another. A copy of the motorist's Highway Code should be given to each motor driver when he receives his driving licence, the cyclist should receive his copy when he registers his bicycle (see para. 73), and the pedestrian's Code should be distributed from door to door. The Codes should be presented in as attractive a form as possible. They should receive the maximum of publicity, and they should be periodically revised.

2. Speed Limit

Principle of speed limit must be retained.

20. The Committee consider that the principle of a speed limit must be retained. There are many places where it will always be essential. It should not however be imposed except where it is necessary. The Committee hope that, with the

improvement of roads and vehicles and the better education of road users, this restriction will have to be employed more and more rarely.

An universal speed limit should not be re-imposed.

21. It is, in the opinion of the Committee, a mistake to attribute the majority of road accidents to reckless driving or to the conduct of the so-called "road-hog", for the greatest number of accidents occurs in areas where a speed limit is already in force. It is true that, where congestion is greater, accidents, though more frequent, are usually less severe, but on the other hand the number of accidents is automatically reduced as congestion disappears. The reduction in severity where the speed limit is imposed is due not to the speed limit but to the fact that high speeds cannot be reached in congested traffic. This should not be adduced as an argument for the re-imposition of an universal speed limit. The Committee are of opinion that such a policy would unreasonably retard progress. They prefer to rely on the improvement of roads and vehicles and on the education of road users. An universal speed limit was a doubtful remedy in the past and was almost impossible to enforce. It would now be still more difficult of enforcement. Q. 2245.

Too many restricted areas at present.

22. The Committee consider that, although the speed limit should in many cases be retained, restricted areas should be reduced in number or extent. It is not possible adequately to enforce the speed limit on the roads and streets which are at present restricted and which *in cumulo* amount to nearly a third of the total mileage in Great Britain. The degree of danger caused by speed varies with the driver and the car. The man who is driving dangerously at 30 m.p.h. in heavy traffic is a greater menace to other road users than the man who is driving well on a clear road at a greater speed. In the case of the majority of modern cars, 30 m.p.h. is a low speed. In some parts of industrial England to-day motorists travel over long stretches of road, all of which are restricted. The driver is, as a result, inclined to become sleepy and less alert, and he is apt to watch his speedometer rather than the road. Unnecessary restricted areas therefore become a source of irritation and danger. Moreover, the driver is given a false impression, viz.: that he has always the right to travel at 30 m.p.h. Lastly, many drivers are tempted to make up for lost time when they reach unrestricted areas, and they end by driving faster and more recklessly than if they had been enabled, by a reduction in the extent of restricted areas, to travel at a higher average speed throughout their journey. Q. 778. Q. 3643.

3. Education and Propaganda

Method which offers quicker results than any other.

Qs. 63, 984,
3257, 4816,
5008, 6035,
6555.

Q. 289.

23. One of the greatest hopes of diminishing accidents lies in the education of public opinion. Success can be obtained in this direction by education and propaganda more effectively than by any other method, and the results are attained more easily and satisfactorily. Every road user should be trained to practise unremittingly the duty of taking habitual care.

Differentiation between education and propaganda.

Q 5673.

24. It is not easy to discriminate between education and propaganda. For the sake of convenience the Committee will make recommendations in regard to the former in connection with the problem of children, and to the latter with regard to adults. In this connection it should be remembered that parents can be reached through their children. It sometimes happens that if children are taught, for instance, to use pedestrian crossings, they often endeavour to persuade their parents to do likewise. It is the duty of parents to co-operate with school authorities by setting an example to their children in the observance of the rules for road behaviour which they have been taught in school.

(I) EDUCATION.

Children.

Qs. 627,
3637, 4282,
5666.
Q. 3197.

Q. 655.

25. It is obvious that one of the most important of remedial measures lies in the education of children. Their minds are more malleable and receptive than the mind of the adult. Young children should be so thoroughly grounded at home in good road behaviour that it becomes automatic on their part. Instruction in road safety should later form part of the school curriculum, which should include talks by the Police, Safety First films and posters, and experiments with model traffic lights and pedestrian crossings.

Griffith-Boscawen and Leishman Reports endorsed.

26. The Committee, as they have stated in paragraph 6 of this Report, are in agreement with the recommendations of the two inter-departmental Committees on Road Safety among School Children, and they do not therefore propose to cover the same ground as was embraced in these enquiries. They desire, however, again to emphasise the necessity of whole-hearted adoption by the Board of Education and the Ministry of Transport of those recommendations, and to urge that greater activity should be employed in carrying them out.

Education of road users should also be thorough in private and in public schools.

27. The inter-departmental reports referred to in the preceding paragraph deal with local authority schools, but the Committee wish to urge that equal care and trouble should be expended in the education of future road users in preparatory and public schools. The conduct of all classes of adults who have been educated in road behaviour when young should gradually tend to make the whole population more "road-minded." The Committee hope that the attention of those in charge of preparatory and public schools will be directed towards the consideration of this important problem.

Q. 3197.

Q. 2291.

(II) PROPAGANDA.

Continuous campaign to be conducted by a Department of Propaganda.

28. Witnesses were unanimous in affirming that an extensive and persistent campaign of educational propaganda should be undertaken, and that it should be aimed at the education of every class of road user. The Committee agree that this is required. They are of opinion that there should be a Department of Propaganda. They do not think that the mentality of the average civil servant is adapted to handling questions of advertisement and propaganda. They consider therefore that the Department of Propaganda should be given a certain amount of independence, and that they should have power to employ commercial experts, who should be given a free hand, within the limits of the funds available, to inaugurate and carry out propagandist campaigns. The campaign should be placed in the hands of an experienced organisation rather than in the hands of local authorities. The Committee recommend that the undertaking should be placed in the hands of some such organisation as the National Safety First Association, which might form the nucleus of the proposed Department of Propaganda. This Department would be subject to the control of the Minister of Transport, inasmuch as he would be the medium through which the Treasury would finance the Department, and his approval would therefore have to be obtained for the manner in which the money is expended. The Committee desire to urge the necessity of the Treasury making an early and substantial grant, in order that the proposed Department may, without avoidable delay, conduct an adequate and sustained campaign for the promotion of road safety.

Qs. 990,
1150, 3140,
5673, 6613
Q. 1509.
Q. 1522.
Qs. 1486-9.

Qs. 1212-16.

Department of Propaganda not to have direct control over the road education of school children.

29. The Committee do not recommend that the proposed Department should interfere with the curriculum for the education of children which is carried on in the schools, but they

advise all education authorities to make the fullest use of the text books, advertisement posters, etc., which may be employed in the course of the campaign.

Revised Highway Code should form basis of propaganda.

- Q. 2282. 30. The Committee refrain from attempting to prescribe in detail the system in accordance with which the proposed new Department should function. They suggest however that the revision of the Highway Code should be entrusted to them.
- Q. 5673. This should form the basis of their propaganda. The observance of the principles embodied in the Code should be encouraged and amplified from the pulpit and in cinemas, and by signs, advertisement posters, pamphlets and lectures, by the formation or co-ordination of local safety organisations, and, above all, by broadcasting, which is one of the most effective of all means. There should also be active propaganda regarding the effects of alcohol on drivers. Above all, the campaign should be a sustained not a spasmodic effort. The assistance of the Post Office might well be sought, for they have been singularly successful in their advertising campaigns, and lessons might also be learnt from the methods adopted to further the National Campaign for Fitness. The advice of the Police also should be invoked, for, in the opinion of the Committee, it would be of great assistance to the new Department.
- Q. 1502.
Qs. 2285, 5332.
Q. 3138.
Q. 1727.
- Q. 2279. The Committee will deal later with the influence which the Police should also have in the propaganda campaign through the wise exercise of their functions.
- Q. 7756.

Good relations between all road users to be fostered by propaganda.

31. The Committee are of opinion that the existence of good relationship between the various types of road users is of supreme importance, and that by fostering good road-manners the number of accidents will be reduced. The Committee recommend that propaganda should be employed for the purpose of making those who do not own motor-cars realise how much they owe to motor transport for the supply of their food, for passenger services and so on. There still remains in the public mind a prejudice against motor-cars, born no doubt in the old days when few people owned them, and when they were considered as luxuries rather than part of an essential and national service, as they are to-day.

Methods should be periodically varied.

- Q. 4272. 32. The Committee think that propaganda to be effective should be constantly changed. Experience shows that the public soon gets familiar with a slogan, and that after a time it has little or no effect.

4. Police

Duty of the Police in regard to reduction of road accidents.

33. The Committee are of opinion that there rests on the police a continuing obligation to study traffic conditions, in order that they may dispose of the available man power to the best advantage, and post men at strategical points so as to secure maximum results. The Committee desire to urge that, whatever degree of control is imposed by Statute and Regulation on road users as a result of this Report, an extensive campaign should be waged by the police, and particularly by its mobile branch, with the object of producing beneficial results by advice and assistance rather than by prosecution. It may be thought that the new offences proposed in this Report are inconsistent with the Committee's recommendation that prosecutions should be reduced in number. It must, however, be pointed out that the Committee have not recommended the constitution of new offences except where an element of danger exists, and where accidents might be diminished by their enactment and enforcement. Q. 1999.

Motor patrols.

34. The Committee were greatly impressed by the evidence which they heard with regard to the success which has attended the experimental scheme of motor patrols in Lancashire. The idea of motor patrols has turned out to be a fruitful one, and great credit is due to the Earl of Cottenham for the part which he played in its development. The Lancashire experiment has been operated on an intensive scale since 1st April, 1937. The scheme cost the Treasury a large sum of money, but, in the opinion of the Committee, the experiment has been well worth its cost. It has succeeded in reducing the casualties in that county by no less than 46 per cent. in comparison with the corresponding period of 1937—the average decrease for the whole of the country being only 5 per cent. The Committee recommend that the policy pursued by the Lancashire police should be adopted throughout the kingdom. The Committee recognise that well-planned and vigorous experiments were also made in other counties, but, as Lancashire was given greater facilities and a far greater proportionate increase in personnel, they desire to cite that county as an example. The Committee are convinced that, the greater the number of motor patrol vehicles, and particularly of those equipped with "loud speakers", which can be put upon the road, the greater will be the reduction of accidents. The Committee desire therefore strongly to recommend to the Treasury that they should without delay make a substantial grant to the Police to enable them to increase the number of motor patrols. The success of the scheme will depend so greatly on the personality of the men who direct Q. 77II. Qs. 1501, 5113, 5161, 5269, 6448. Q. 7750.

it in each county that unusual care should be taken in their selection. At the same time the Committee urge on the police authorities the necessity for a combined effort being made by the whole of their personnel. Every uniformed member of the force can and should assist in controlling road users. There is no doubt that the presence of a disciplined force to see that the roads are properly used has a steadying effect on drivers, and is a potent way of inculcating the education and the propaganda which the Committee are anxious to see developed.

“ Shock tactics ” necessary for motor patrols.

35. The essence of the system of motor patrolling should lie in what may be described as “ shock tactics.” It is essential to break away from the idea of patrolling a road in accordance with a regular routine, or of distributing police cars evenly along all the roads. Roads should be patrolled according to the density of accidents, and at the special times and in the special places where they are likely to occur. This information can be made available if police forces would adopt the admirable system of traffic accident maps at present in vogue at Scotland Yard. Roads which have bad records should be black listed. In the Lancashire experiment, where an extensive campaign on a particular road was carried out, the accident total for one month on that road was reduced by 73 per cent. as compared with the corresponding month in the preceding year. It is to be hoped that by “ shock tactics ” the novelty and interest of the scheme will be sustained, for it would suffer if public interest and co-operation were allowed to relax.

Courtesy of the police is essential.

36. Tact, tolerance and understanding are obviously required on the part both of the police and of the road user. The necessity for courtesy is already part of the training of every member of the police force, and it is only by that policy, and by eliminating vexatious prosecutions, that the police in general and motor patrols in particular will secure the willing co-operation of the public. The Committee consider it important in this connection that all police vehicles, wireless control boxes, etc., should be conspicuously labelled with police signs. The Committee are not in favour of plain clothes policemen being employed for the control of road users. The keynote of the scheme should be not to trap or to harass them, but to discourage and to prevent careless or dangerous behaviour on their part—to advise rather than to prosecute.

Necessity for superintendents and inspectors of police to have practical knowledge of driving.

37. The Committee wish to emphasise their opinion that prosecutions for offences in which there is no element of danger should be reduced to a minimum. They realise, however, that

Qs. 1499,
5333.

Q. 7792.

Q. 7791.

Q. 7775.

Q. 7822.

Q. 7830.

Q. 5333.

Q. 987.

Q. 7831.

there may be doubt as to what is the difference between a minor or technical offence and one in which there is an element of danger. They consider that practical experience of driving is the best guide. They recommend, therefore, that all superintendents, and as large a number as possible of inspectors should undergo an advanced course on the motor patrol scheme. This should, of course, include tuition in driving, for there is no doubt that the greater the number of members of the force who are trained to drive, the more the police will be able adequately to fulfil their duty of helping road users in their difficulties. There is therefore need for a concentrated effort to provide adequate training schools for teaching a large proportion of the police force to drive.

Propaganda by police.

38. The Committee recommend that a certain number of police patrols, chosen because of their aptitude for the work, should be selected for special propaganda work. They should be instructed to talk to motor cyclists when opportunity arises on the road, not because they have committed offences, but in order to point out to them that they are a vulnerable class of road user, to discuss with them the elements of danger, and to advise regarding their avoidance. These officers might also have talks with members at their motor-cycling clubs and works, and at other places where motor cyclists congregate. Similar action should be taken with regard to cyclists, and to a limited extent with pedestrians, particularly aged pedestrians. The police should talk to the latter in the streets, and, if permitted, at clubs and in reading rooms where old people meet together. Finally the Committee recommend that the Post Office should from time to time hand printed slips of warning to old age pensioners when they collect their pensions.

5. Alcohol

Warning to applicants for driving licences.

39. The effect of even moderate quantities of alcohol on drivers is not generally realised. The Committee think that propaganda should be employed to train and fortify public opinion in the condemnation of persons who drink before driving—above all to discourage the practice of “One for the road.” A warning of this danger should receive prominence in the Highway Code, and it should be emphasised that, even where there is no question of drunkenness, a small quantity of alcohol is for many drivers most dangerous. The driver who has imbibed alcohol experiences a feeling of “euphoria”, or careless well-being, and entertains a mistaken idea that he is driving better than usual. He does not realise that his reactions are slower, that his neuro-muscular

control is impaired, and that his vision is restricted. The Committee think that magistrates and their clerks should be advised by circular regarding this matter. It is essential that they and the public generally should realise that "under the influence of drink" does not necessarily mean intoxication in the ordinary sense, but that driving skill is affected long before a man is consciously under the influence of alcohol.

Treatment of offenders by the Courts.

40. The Committee are of opinion that, if, when an accident occurs, the Court is satisfied that the driver was then under the influence of drink, the offence should be treated with exemplary severity. At present penalties, although adequate, are not in many cases properly or uniformly enforced. The Committee consider that licences should be automatically endorsed or suspended on conviction of such an offence. They cannot believe that there is any justification for Courts being given a discretion to decide whether in such cases there are "special reasons" why a licence should not be endorsed. In any case the Committee are satisfied that the discretion allowed to magistrates in this matter should be exercised with greater uniformity.

Trial by jury.

41. The Committee were informed that any one who can afford the expense of being tried by a jury on such a charge will almost certainly elect to do so, in preference to being tried by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Experience shows that juries are less likely to convict than magistrates are. Juries may be influenced by all sorts of excuses such as shell-shock, concussion, emotional distress, etc. The Committee consider that a man, if he is fit to be in the possession of a driving licence, should realise his responsibilities and should conduct himself accordingly. They do not, however, feel able to adopt a suggestion which was made to them that the right of a defendant to elect to be tried by jury for this offence should be abrogated. Such an exception to the general rule that a defendant may elect to be tried by a jury for an indictable offence would not in their opinion be wise. They hope, nevertheless, that clear directions will always be given to juries as to the meaning of the words "under the influence of drink." It is not in the public interest that so serious an offence should be insufficiently punished, as it often is to-day.

Blood tests.

42. The ordinary conception of a blood test is incorrect. The public are inclined to think that, because a given quantity of alcohol may have more effect on one person than on another,

the blood test would be unfair. The test however depends, not on the amount of alcohol which is in the stomach and the intestines, but on the proportion which exists in the blood. In the case of persons accustomed to consume considerable quantities of alcohol there may be incomplete absorption into the blood stream or more rapid elimination therefrom, but, where the proportion amounts to 0·15 per cent. of the blood, then science demonstrates that that person is under the influence of drink, and is incapable of proper control of a vehicle. The amount of alcohol which he has consumed to produce this result is not material. The percentage of alcohol circulating in the blood at any given moment can be calculated with scientific accuracy. The Committee recommend that blood tests should be recognised, and that arrangements should be made to carry them out on a voluntary basis. Specimens of the blood should be taken by the police doctor, or, if preferred by the accused, by his own doctor, and they should be examined by a skilled investigator. Two specimens should always be taken, lest one be lost by breakage or from some other cause. The Committee do not think that the time has yet come when the imposition of compulsory blood tests would be sanctioned by Parliament, but they hope that at a later date the public will be so educated as to agree that these tests should be made obligatory in appropriate cases.

Q. 5861.

Q. 5817.

Q. 5852.

6. Insurance.

No financial recompense to accrue to persons convicted of grave road offences.

43. The Committee consider that, where a person is convicted of the grave offence of manslaughter, or of other offences under Sections 11 and 15 of the Road Traffic Act, 1930, or of an offence under Section 35 of the Highways Act, 1861, in connection with a mechanically propelled vehicle, he should be disabled from receiving benefit under any insurance policy held by him in respect of any injury sustained by him or by the vehicle driven by him, assuming it to be his property. An insurance company should not, however, be relieved in respect of any liability for third party claims, including claims by the owner of the vehicle which the convicted person was driving, under the policy of insurance. The principle underlying this recommendation is that, while no financial recompense should accrue to any convicted person as a result of his crime, all other persons who have suffered financially or physically by reason of the accident should be repaid the damage which they suffered. The adoption of this recommendation should, incidentally, have the effect of lowering the premiums.

Qs. 6748
6996.

Q. 7001.

Q. 7058.



7. Further recommendations regarding conduct and control of road users.

Round table conference between representatives of road users.

Q. 5675. 44. The Committee now proceed to make recommendations with the object of attaining through a wider control of road users a greater measure of safety on the roads. Before doing so they wish to draw attention once more to the fundamental need for friendly co-operation between all types of road users. This cannot be sufficiently emphasised. To-day the Committee fear that, as between the various classes of road users, an atmosphere of suspicion and even antagonism prevails. This is fatal to the cause of road safety. The Committee would like to see a round table conference convened by the Minister of Transport between the representatives of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, with the object of removing misunderstanding between them, and preparing concrete and concerted schemes for the promotion of road safety.

(I) ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW.

Uniformity in sentences.

Q. 5570. 45. The Committee consider that there are not many matters in regard to the control of offending motorists which cannot be dealt with adequately under the legislation which now exists. Recommendations to deal with exceptions to this view, and, in addition, proposals in regard to the further control of cyclists and pedestrians, will be found in their appropriate places in this Report. One of the most difficult problems, however, with which the Committee has been faced is how to secure uniformity in the decisions of the many and varied tribunals which are called on to try road offences. County Benches are said to be more severe than Magistrates in cities and boroughs. Juries on the other hand are reputed often to acquit unwisely.

Satisfactory solution of problem of disparity in sentences difficult to secure.

Q. 5199. 46. Uniformity in sentences inflicted by the Courts is of course desirable, but it is almost impossible to attain in a system whereby similar cases are tried by a large number of different Courts, composed of persons of varying ages, education, and points of view which sometimes amount to prejudice. The difficulty of devising methods to avoid this disparity is almost insuperable. Circulars to Benches are issued by the Home Office,

but it is doubtful whether they influence the personal views and in some cases the prejudices of magistrates in this connection. The ideal course would be that road offences should be tried by a Central Court composed of a permanent personnel, but that is obviously out of the question. It was suggested to the Committee that, as no one Court could find time to deal with the vast number of cases involved, there should be a number of Special Traffic Courts set up over the country to try road offences only.

Special Traffic Courts cannot be recommended.

47. The Committee have carefully considered this suggestion, but they have come to the conclusion that they cannot recommend its adoption. The principle of dividing justice up in that manner, is in the opinion of the Committee, unsound, and it would not in any case strike at the root of the trouble, namely that every individual in passing judgment has his own personal point of view, which unfortunately, although sometimes prejudiced in regard to road offences, must in human nature exist to some extent in regard to any offence from petty theft to murder.

Some objections to Special Traffic Courts.

48. The Committee are prepared to admit that in theory the principle of Special Traffic Courts may sound attractive, but they consider that any apparent advantages of the proposal are outweighed by practical objections, some of which they will recite. First, it would be inconvenient if cases were not dealt with locally, as the witnesses are almost always police officers who could not be taken out of their localities without delaying and hampering the administration of the law. It is desirable that cases should be dealt with more promptly than they are at present. Secondly, the question of accommodation would also present great difficulties. In many towns it is already difficult to find adequate accommodation even for existing local Courts.

Expense and difficulty of supplying personnel.

49. Perhaps the most important objection of all is that of expense. This alone renders the proposal prohibitive. The advocates of the scheme admitted that it would cost about £10,000,000 annually. This could not be offset by the receipt of fines and costs. The Committee understand that even now the total receipts of all kinds from road offences amount only to between three and four hundred thousand pounds in the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. In spite of the fact that lay magistrates are not salaried, there is already an annual loss on the administration of those Courts. It was also stated that 16,500

Qs. 2632,
2731.

Q. 2732.

people would be required to staff the proposed Courts. Finally, it must be remembered that much must necessarily depend on the persons who would have to try the cases. It is clear that there is not at the Bar an unlimited supply of persons equipped with the necessary talent or experience to enable them adequately to perform the judicial duties involved. The balance would therefore have to be drawn from among members of the Bar who either had not been called long enough or had not achieved sufficient practice to qualify them to discharge such responsible tasks. This would be undesirable.

Complaints of capricious sentences.

50. The Committee, although they do not recommend the setting up of Special Traffic Courts, realise that there is good ground for the criticism that sentences are in some cases capricious, and that they vary greatly in different localities. Nevertheless it should be remembered that critics who have merely read newspaper accounts of cases are not sufficiently well acquainted as a rule with the local circumstances to be able to form a proper judgment. A reader cannot know whether the offence was committed at a dangerous spot, nor can he be aware of the demeanour of the defendant, the state of the road, and many other particulars necessary to the formation of a just judgment. The problem is most difficult to solve. The Committee, after much reflection, can only recommend that, where complaints against particular Benches are sufficiently numerous and apparently so well founded as to justify action, the Lord Chancellor should be empowered to deal with the particular Bench concerned. The Committee hope that, after the report has been issued by the Home Office Committee which is at present considering the question of the appointment and conditions of service of Justices' Clerks, some improvement in the conduct of Petty Sessional Courts may be effected; for much depends on the skill and judgment of the Clerk.

Further recommendations in regard to administration of the law.

51. The Committee, while they cannot claim to have evolved a satisfactory solution which will secure uniformity in sentences, consider that, if the following recommendations are adopted the administration of the law would be improved. They consider these recommendations to be within their Terms of Reference, not because they bear directly on the accident problem, but because the Committee believe that the more the "house can be set in order" in regard to the treatment of road offences, the more probability there will be of obtaining co-operation amongst

road users and eliminating the causes of accidents. The Committee realise that legislation would be required in order to give effect to some of these proposals.

Simplification and consolidation of existing regulations.

52. There are at present over 100 regulations which a motor driver should observe, and there are some 2,000 regulations which road transport as a whole, including those engaged in the manufacture of vehicles, has to master. The Committee feel that the simplification and consolidation of existing regulations, and, even more, the elimination of many technical offences of a kind which might properly be left to the judgment and good sense of road users, would emphasise the more serious offences which lead to road accidents. This should result in a better understanding on the part of all road users, and should give the police authorities opportunity to concentrate their attention on the dangerous or careless road user.

Q. 2925.

Q. 1149.

Police and defendants not to be obliged to attend Courts with regard to minor offences.

53. The Committee consider that a great deal of the time of police officers is wasted by their having to wait long periods at the Courts for cases which eventually are dealt with in two or three minutes. Moreover it is also often unnecessarily vexatious and expensive for defendants to be obliged to attend the Courts. The Committee have heard of young constables being encouraged by their superiors to bring minor charges in order to accustom them to giving evidence. The Committee are of the opinion that, if a defendant admits the facts, and is prepared to plead "Guilty", his attendance and that of the police witness or witnesses at Court should not be necessary. The matter could be put before the Court by the solicitor representing the Police. The Committee consider that, in simple charges, such as parking offences, there should be an extension of the practice of serving summonses by post. It would be necessary, in cases of speed limit offences, that the speed at which the constable alleged that the defendant was travelling should be stated in the charge, as this would have a bearing on the decision of the defendant as to whether he should appear or not. Serious offences, such as dangerous driving, could not of course be adjusted in this manner.

Q. 5151.

Q. 5190.

Previous convictions.

54. Courts should, in the opinion of the Committee, be empowered to take account of statements of a defendant's previous record in his absence, provided that notice of his previous convictions was served on him with the summons and not

Q. 393.

Q. 395.

contested by him. This arrangement would obviate the danger of inaccurate statements, or their attribution in good faith to a defendant to whom in fact they did not apply.

Verdict of manslaughter.

- Q. 3961. 55. There is at present a reluctance on the part of juries to convict of manslaughter. They associate the word with an act of violence rather than an act of recklessness. The Committee consider that, if a new nomenclature such as already exists in New Zealand to-day for the offence were instituted such as "causing death by negligent driving" it would be easier to obtain convictions, and the Committee think it is in the public interest that persons who cause death by their carelessness should be convicted. The Committee are also of opinion that, in addition to the existing right of juries to find persons committed for manslaughter guilty of the lesser charge of dangerous driving, they should also be given the alternative of finding them guilty of driving without due care and attention.
- Q. 6759.
- Q. 5133.

Coroners' Courts.

- Qs. 3942, 7147. 56. The Committee consider that the function of a Coroner should be to ascertain the cause of death from a physical or a medical point of view, and also to consider whether there was foul play. He should not investigate or make observations regarding responsibility for an accident. This assessment should be made in the appropriate court. The Committee were informed that the Ministry of Transport never send a representative to an inquest on a road fatality. The Committee consider that this should be done. There must have been many cases in which the condition of the road was the cause of fatal accidents. In such cases the police would not bring proceedings against any individual, and, unless the jury attach a rider to their verdict, the Ministry or Local Authority might not have their attention drawn to the matter.
- Q. 3985.

Postponement of disqualification of drivers.

- Q. 6799. 57. The Committee consider that magistrates should be enabled, at their discretion, to postpone disqualification of drivers for 24 or 48 hours. This would eliminate the quandary of a motorist, who, having driven to the Court, finds himself disqualified from driving home.

(II) DRIVERS.

Little new legislation required to deal with offending motorists.

58. There were 33,706 road accidents during the year 1936-7 in which no mechanically-propelled vehicle was involved. The Committee record this fact, because there is a popular fallacy

to the effect that the motor driver, being in control of what is sometimes termed a lethal weapon, is usually to blame when an accident occurs. Such attribution is understandable, but it is not borne out by accident statistics. Nevertheless, 66,982 accidents in the year referred to were attributed to drivers of vehicles. This represents 33.6 per cent. of the total of the accidents which occurred during that period. The Committee have already indicated that there are few matters on which they desire to recommend new legislation in order to deal adequately with offending motorists, and that what is required is a more stringent and uniform enforcement of the existing law. The Committee will, however, make some suggestions regarding the further control of drivers, particularly in regard to the issue of driving licences, and the endorsement, suspension and cancellation thereof. Q. 3817.

Issue of provisional driving licences.

59. The Committee are of opinion that "L" driving licences should be issued for a short period only, and that, if the holder fails to qualify within the assigned period, he should be considered as not competent to drive, and should not be allowed to take out a new provisional licence until at least a year has elapsed. At present one provisional licence can be taken out immediately after another. It is not clear whether, under the present law, a Court can take away the provisional licence from a learner who was found not to be driving with a licensed person. It should be enacted that the Court can do so. It should also be compulsory that the person accompanying the learner should be licensed to drive a vehicle of similar type to the vehicle on which he is teaching. Qs. 3350, 6866. Q. 7029. Q. 7027. Q. 7932.

Examiners of applicants for driving licences.

60. In the opinion of the Committee, no person is capable of putting an applicant through a driving test unless he is himself an expert and experienced driver. They consider that the examiner should be required to undergo an advanced course in driving, and should pass a rigorous test before he becomes a qualified examiner.

Driving tests.

61. The driving test should be made more searching than it now is. It would be of value if the proposed Road Safety Research Board (see paragraph 101) were to investigate the methods in vogue at schools for driving to-day. The Committee were impressed by the evidence which they heard in reference to the training of drivers employed by the London Passenger Transport Board. While it cannot be expected that so high a standard as is enforced by that Board can be Q. 5188. Q. 3728. Q. 4180 et seq.

reached by the average driver, nevertheless some improvement in the present method might be made as a result of the study of the system of the London Passenger Transport Board.

Use of motor horns.

Q. 6570. 62. The Committee consider that particular attention to the use of the horn should be paid in driving tests. The day when Courts were inclined to assume that a driver involved in an accident was free of blame if he had sounded his horn is past. Q. 6409. The too frequent use of the motor horn is dangerous, although it cannot be dispensed with in cases of emergency. It should Q. 6434. be used when overtaking and also at corners and cross-roads. Qs. 6448-57.

Q. 6456. The Committee deprecate the practice of "driving on the horn". The view was expressed to them that there are some drivers who drive carefully only on occasions when, for some reason or other, they are deprived of its use. Drivers should Qs. 6437, rely on their own alertness rather than depend on the horn as 6570. an expedient for clearing the way. Restraint in the use of the Q. 6420. horn would also obviate the danger of pedestrians and cyclists being encouraged subconsciously to depend on it.

"Stop" lights and Direction Indicators on vehicles.

Q. 7932. 63. The Committee are of opinion that in an emergency it is often dangerous for a driver to remove his hand from the wheel in order to extend his arm by way of warning. The use of "Stop" lights and direction indicators on motor vehicles should be made a legal and sufficient signal without the necessity of extending the driver's arm. The indicators referred to should be properly placed, and should be visible from behind.

Application for motor vehicle licence.

Q. 7932. 64. An application for a licence for a motor vehicle should be accompanied by a policy covering the same period as that for which the motor vehicle licence is being taken out. The production of a Cover Note for a fortnight from an Insurance Company or their agent should not be sufficient.

Conditions for issue and renewal of driving licences.

Qs. 3058, 7243. 65. An application for a driving licence should be accompanied, as in the case of a passport, by the attestation of a responsible person, and it should also be accompanied by a photograph.

Licensing authorities should be empowered to satisfy themselves as to the fitness in regard to health and age of applicants, as well as to their familiarity with the Highway Code, before

either issuing or renewing driving licences, and, if necessary, in the latter case, the licensing authority should be given the right to order a new driving test.

Special attention should be paid to the warning against the effects of alcohol, even when consumed in small quantities.

A driving licence should be renewed only after a further test has been undergone, if an interval of a year has elapsed during which a driver has had no licence.

Q. 3053,
3195, 3613,
5186, 6866.

The possession of more than one driving licence a serious offence.

66. The Committee consider that the possession of more than one driving licence should be treated by the courts with severity, because it renders the holder, if undetected, immune from suspension, for he can spread his endorsements over both licences.

Endorsement and suspension of driving licences.

67. There are two schools of thought in regard to the endorsement of driving licences. On the one hand it is urged that frequent endorsement will keep off the roads those who have proved themselves to be unfit to drive. On the other hand it is contended that, if endorsement is applied to serious offences only, there will be a greater effort made to keep a licence "clean" as long as possible. If the Committee's recommendation that the Lancashire experiment be extended throughout the Kingdom is adopted, the problem will largely disappear, as trivial and technical cases will not come into court at all. The Committee are, however, satisfied that endorsement is necessary in all serious cases.

Q. 3486.

Q. 416.

The Committee would like to see great restraint exercised in regard to the suspension of licences. For it must be remembered that suspension frequently involves taking away the livelihood of a professional driver. Nevertheless, it is a necessary penalty which should be retained, though employed with care where the future of the offender may be prejudiced.

Severe punishment should be meted out to anyone who is found driving after his licence has been suspended. Any person whose licence has been suspended should be required to pass a driving test before the licence is restored.

Q. 3821.

Reasons for not endorsing driving licence to be stated in open Court.

68. In certain cases, if it is considered that there are "special reasons" for not doing so, the Court is given a discretion whether they should endorse or suspend a driving licence or not. The Committee consider that in such cases the special reasons should be stated in open Court. They are of opinion that at present the discretion conferred on the Court is not always

Q. 6858

- Q. 6769-76. judicially exercised. It was suggested to the Committee that, if the prosecution is not satisfied with the "special reasons" given by the Court, a right of appeal should be given to the police. This would be unusual procedure, for it might be regarded as an appeal against the discretion which the law has vested in the magistrates. The Committee do not feel able to recommend this proposal, although they appreciate that, owing to the apparent lack of uniformity of sentences in Courts of Summary Jurisdiction, the right, if conferred, might tend to make magistrates more cautious in the exercise of the discretion conferred on them.
- Q. 6827.

Endorsement of driving licences in regard to all offences carrying increased sentences after previous convictions.

- Qs. 399, 416. 69. The Committee recommend that, where an offence is punishable more severely after a previous conviction, it should be a statutory requirement that the Court should order the endorsement on the licence of the particulars both of the first and of all subsequent offences. The licence should be produced to the Court in all cases after conviction of a fresh offence and before sentence, so that the Court may determine the relevance and the importance of any previous convictions.

Cancellation of driving licences of accident-prone drivers.

- Qs. 3313, 6602, 7215. 70. There are certain drivers who are constitutionally unfitted to drive a car. It is difficult to analyse the reason for this. It is probably due to a combination of vagueness, slowness in decision, nervousness, deficiency in road sense and judgment. It is not necessarily due to recklessness, or to bad road manners, or to active fault. If a driver is found to be accident prone, through defects either of capacity or of temperament, or by being involved in a series of accidents, the Committee consider that, in the interests of all concerned, he should be disqualified from driving. The Committee hope that insurance companies will assist in carrying out this recommendation. They should refuse to insure drivers who are found to be accident prone. Persons who take out policies with new insurance companies, and in so doing fail to give details of their previous relations with other insurance companies, should be treated with severity. Otherwise accident prone drivers may go to a new insurance company, and start afresh with a clean record each time they take out a new policy. There is much scope for psychological research in the detection of undesirable drivers who ought to be eliminated from the roads. This might be undertaken by the proposed Road Safety Research Board (see paragraph 101).
- Q. 6604.
Q. 3726.
- Q. 3314.
- Q. 3724.

(III) PEDAL CYCLISTS.

General.

71. There were, in the year 1936-7, 71,622 cyclists killed or injured on the roads. The Ministry of Transport in their statistics attribute to cyclists the blame for 43,944 of these casualties, and they also say that 22·8 per cent. of all the accidents in the year 1936-7 should be attributed to cyclists. The Committee propose to recommend that the use of cycle tracks, where suitable, should be made compulsory for cyclists (see paragraph 121). They further consider that the law requires strengthening in regard to the general control of cyclists. At present there is only one offence which they can commit, viz., that of reckless riding. There is much thoughtless conduct amongst cyclists which is responsible for many accidents. There is, however, no ground for the unfortunate impression, which seems to be held by many cyclists, that motorists wish to have them removed from the road, thus robbing them of their favourite recreation, which in some cases, is also their only means of transport and even of livelihood. Such is certainly not the desire of the Committee. Any recommendations which they may make for the control of cyclists are made, not only for the safety of other road users, but are, in the opinion of the Committee, in the interests of cyclists themselves. Q. 1716.
 The Committee regret that cyclists do not strive to co-operate more wholeheartedly in schemes which are devised to ensure their own protection. Nevertheless the Committee desire to pay a tribute to the efforts which cyclists' clubs have made, by methods of propaganda, leaflets, etc., to inculcate the necessity for care and circumspection on the part of their members. Qs. 598, 4710. Q. 7140.

Children.

72. Children under 10 years old should not be allowed to cycle on the public roads. Some local authorities already prohibit the use of cycles and of fairy cycles by young children. This prohibition should be exercised with discretion after children reach the age of 10 years, as, in the opinion of the Committee, it is better to educate children in the best way of using a cycle while they are still under school influence than to let them learn by haphazard methods later in life. Children should not be allowed to ride cycles on public roads until they have received through their schools a proficiency badge from the local authority. When children first begin to cycle, it should be the duty of the parent to ensure that they do not use cycles which are too big for them, or which are defective, and to ensure also that the child is aware of the provisions of the Highway Code. These obligations should be shared by the local Q. 6592. Q. 5670. Q. 5787. Q. 1458. Q. 5785.

- Q. 653. authority. At present some 18 of these authorities inspect cycles, and the parents are notified of any defect in brakes, etc. Education authorities should give instruction on road behaviour, and should enlist the services of the police or other suitable persons to give talks to the children.

Registration of pedal cycles.

- Qs. 285, 514, 770, 1880, 2315, 2921, 4267, 5136, 5533, 6059, 6591, 7235. 73. The Committee are of opinion that pedal cycles should be registered, and that number plates, of similar size to those used on motor cycles, should be prominently exhibited on pedal cycles also. The Committee do not consider that a label with the owner's name and address is sufficient. The cost of registration should be kept as low as possible. At present there is no method of tracing a cyclist who is seen to be riding dangerously, or who, being involved in a casualty, can "get away with it". A further accident may easily result if an attempt were made by the police to stop him forcibly. The Committee hope that by a system of registration a sense of greater responsibility will be imparted to cyclists generally.
- Q. 5231.
Q. 486.
Q. 515.

Compulsory insurance.

- Qs. 5136, 5239. 74. The Committee are of opinion that a system of compulsory insurance against third party risks should be enforced among cyclists. Where the owner of a bicycle is a child or young person, the parent or guardian should be made responsible for taking out the policy. Compulsory insurance could not, however, be enforced unless the Committee's recommendation that cycles should be registered be adopted. Several cyclists' clubs already have schemes of insurance at low premiums in operation. These are included in the members' annual subscriptions. The representative of one club informed the Committee that they insured their members at a rate of 1s. per member per annum, and that in 1936 the claims amongst 50,000 members only amounted to £702. Compulsory insurance should not therefore be a serious burden on the cyclist.
- Q. 5545.
Q. 7106.
Q. 5792.

Accidents to be reported.

- Qs. 2921, 5144, 5543, 6058. 75. The Committee consider that cyclists should be compelled, as motorists are, to report all accidents in which they are involved. The Committee are of opinion that the psychological effect upon the cyclist of this obligation would be to make him more careful. The proposed number plates would render it difficult for the cyclist to avoid reporting an accident, and, if he failed to do so, even if he were riding a borrowed bicycle, it should not be difficult to trace him.

Red rear lamps.

76. There were in the year 1936-7 133 deaths caused by collisions with the rear of a cycle. The Committee consider that during the hours of darkness a red lamp should be carried by cyclists, in addition to the red reflector on a white patch which is already compulsory. The representatives of cyclists opposed this proposal, but the Committee were not impressed by their arguments. They seemed largely to rely on the mechanical difficulty of keeping the lamp alight, and yet they mentioned seven countries in which rear lights are to-day compulsory. They also urged that the result of the motorist depending on cycles having rear lamps would be that the motorist would increase his speed. They failed to convince the Committee of this. In addition, they stated that it is the duty of the driver of an overtaking vehicle to drive within the limits of the lights which he employs. The Committee agree with this counsel of perfection, but, if it is not attained, the problem of avoiding a collision remains unsolved. The Committee are re-inforced in their recommendation by the belief that, if cyclists are obliged to carry rear red lamps, the strain of driving at night, with its attendant risks, would be considerably lessened.

Q. 6052.
Qs. 281, 787,
855, 932,
1179, 1390,
1880, 2316,
2462, 2923,
3075, 3242,
3600, 4262,
4710, 5136,
5533, 6052,
6595, 7254.
Q. 3851.
Q. 5690.
Q. 4931.

Bells.

77. Cyclists should be compelled to carry bells on their bicycles. Owing to their silent approach they are a potential source of danger, particularly to pedestrians.

Qs. 5139,
6062.

Articles carried on pedal cycles.

78. It should be an offence for a cyclist to carry anything on his cycle which interferes with his control of the machine or with his view of the road.

Cyclists not to ride more than two abreast.

79. The Committee recommend that cyclists should not be allowed to ride more than two abreast, except when another cycle is overtaking. In the latter case the bell and the hand signals in use by motor drivers should be employed. There might of course have to be certain exceptions to this regulation. For instance, when several hundred bicyclists issue at lunch time or in the evening from factory gates, it would not be possible to insist on the observance of this regulation, but it is to be hoped that, in such cases, the number of the cyclists concerned would give them a degree of immunity from danger.

Qs. 5046,
5136, 5533.

Efficient brakes.

Q. 2271.

Qs. 5136,
5533.

80. The Ministry of Transport has power to issue Regulations as to the number, nature and use of brakes on cycles. The Committee do not understand why they have not used this power. It is in their opinion important that two efficient brakes on every cycle should be made compulsory.

(IV) PEDESTRIANS.

The chief victims.

Q. 6043.

81. Although pedal cyclists and private motor vehicles make the greatest contribution to the number of motor accidents, the chief victims are pedestrians.

Problem of pedestrian safety largely urban.

Q. 3971.

82. There were, in the year 1936-7, 69,634 pedestrians killed or injured in built-up areas as against 8,094 in areas not built up. In other words, although the mileage of restricted roads is only about a quarter of that of unrestricted roads, more than eight times the number of casualties occurred on restricted roads. The problem is, therefore, to a large extent, an urban one. A London coroner informed the Committee that, looking back over more than a quarter of a century of experience, the commonest cause of street fatalities was, in his opinion, that pedestrians stepping off the pavement did not look where they were going. This dictum applies with less force to rural areas. The following interesting comparison can be found in the "Ministry of Transport Report on Accidents Involving Personal Injury" for the year 1936-7:—

Accidents attributed to pedestrians.

Sole or main cause.	Built-up areas.	Areas not built-up.
Heedless of traffic—crossing carriageway ...	22,503	1,335
Heedless of traffic <i>not</i> crossing carriageway	1,977	1,026
Total	24,480	2,361

It will be seen from this table that one of the chief problems which the Committee have to solve is how to prevent pedestrians, in built-up areas in particular, from heedlessly entering the carriageway.

Principal remedies.

83. The Committee will deal later in their Report with the question of how to render pavements and pedestrian crossings safe. They have also made recommendations with regard to propaganda and to the education, in this connection, of the public in general and of children in particular. These are the chief methods, in the opinion of the Committee, by which a greater measure of protection may be attained to save pedestrians both from their own carelessness and from the carelessness of other road users. At present a pedestrian can only commit one offence, namely, failing to cross a pedestrian crossing with due despatch. It is, in the opinion of the Committee, time that the pedestrian should be made to realise that, as a road user, he has a share in responsibility for road safety. Qs. 832, 3035.

Offence to walk heedlessly.

84. The Committee feel that they have no alternative but to propose that it should be made an offence for a pedestrian to enter the carriageway heedlessly, just as it is an offence for a motorist or bicyclist to drive or ride heedlessly. If the pedestrian realised that, by suddenly stepping off a pavement without warning, or by recklessly emerging from the front of or from behind a vehicle, he would render himself liable to police court proceedings, he would exercise greater care. The Committee believe that psychologically this reform would have a steadying influence upon the conduct of the pedestrian. The Committee hope that any fines imposed for this offence will be given publicity in the Press, in order that other pedestrians may realise that they too are liable to prosecution if they are not careful. Qs. 825, 925, 6080. Q. 6567.

Pedestrians not to use cycle tracks.

85. Pedestrians should not be allowed to use cycle tracks. Qs. 922, 4096.

Pedestrians to keep left on footways.

86. The Committee think that pedestrians should be advised by notices and by propaganda to walk on the left of pavements and footpaths, thus forming a general "left-keeping" habit. The Committee do not, however, recommend that regulations to this effect should be made. The difficulty of enforcing them would be too great. Qs. 1840, 4251.

Control of children under 7 years of age.

87. Statistics show that 23.9 per cent. of the accidents attributed to pedestrians in the year 1936-7 were caused mainly by children under 7 years of age, and that 16,212 children

- Q. 1458. under that age were killed or injured on the roads during that year. The Committee think that parents and guardians should do more than is done at present to control their children. Parents and guardians should not send young children out unaccompanied on errands; they should be more vigilant in preventing them from leaving their charge when walking or shopping, and, above all, they should inculcate on them the necessity of exercising great care when stepping off the pavement on to the carriageway.

More playgrounds for children.

- Q. 5507. 88. The Committee consider it important that more playgrounds and open spaces for use by children should be provided. Many accidents occur to children when playing in the streets. The Committee consider that school playgrounds in congested areas should be open in the evening for children's play. Where playgrounds cannot be provided, local authorities should close certain streets to vehicular traffic, in order that they may be reserved as playgrounds for children.
- Qs. 630, 3339.

More police required at commencement and at end of school hours.

- Q. 630. 89. The Committee recommend that, at the hours when children are going to and returning from school, extra police should be stationed at dangerous crossings, in order that they may shepherd the children safely across.

PART II.

ROADS.

1. General.

Bad Road conditions must be removed.

90. The Committee are of opinion that the majority of accidents are the result of human error in conduct or in judgment. Q. 855.
At the same time, bad and inadequate road conditions are important contributory factors in the accident problem. If these road defects were removed, there would, in the opinion of the Committee, be a substantial reduction in the number of accidents. The Committee believe that, unless there is more rapid progress made in remedying these defects, there must, with the increase of traffic, come a further increase in the number of accidents.

Criticism of the statistics of the Ministry of Transport.

91. The Committee have already indicated, in paragraph 16 of this Report, that, in their opinion, the views of the Ministry of Transport in this matter are not in all cases well founded. The Committee are strongly of this opinion. If indeed it were true, as the statistics of the Ministry suggest, that only 63 fatal accidents out of the total of the 6,337 which occurred in 1936-7 ought to be attributed mainly to road conditions, the Ministry might well curtail their road improvement programme, and reduce their personnel. A perusal, however, of Memorandum 483* leaves the Committee in doubt whether the Ministry believe in the theory advanced on their behalf. In their original evidence Qs. 39-40. the representatives of the Ministry nevertheless affirmed that over 90 per cent. of accidents were due to human errors of judgment or thoughtlessness. They argued that if all Q. 7500. drivers, pedestrians and cyclists used the roads with sufficient care, there would be a negligible number of accidents, whereas it was suggested by a number of witnesses that, if roads were improved by segregation of traffic, dual carriageways, etc., and if vehicles were improved, a similar result would be obtained without dependence on the far more difficult task of improving human characteristics. One witness—the County Surveyor of Q. 893. Oxfordshire—affirmed that in his county 76 per cent. of the fatal accidents might have been prevented by road improvement, and that dual carriageways alone would have reduced the accident toll by 42 per cent. The Committee realise that these are two extreme points of view. The truth, as so often happens, probably lies between them. A witness from the Ministry did, towards the end of the enquiry, in fact modify the point of view Qs. 7474-6.

* Ministry of Transport Memorandum on the Lay-out and Construction of Roads, 1938.

- Q. 7262. from which they regard the problem. It should also be remembered that the primary object of the investigation carried out by the County Surveyor of Oxfordshire was to determine the extent to which faults in the highway system should be held responsible for accident causation. Even so, the difference between the Ministry's figure of 1·2 per cent. and his figure of 76 per cent. is startling.

Inadequacy of present system.

- Q. 1022. 92. The present road system is inadequate and out of date.
 Q. 3342. It does not meet the traffic needs, the convenience, or the safety of road users. In many cases roads which were designed to carry horse traffic only are still being used, without widening or other improvement, to cope with the present-day stream of motor traffic. If more vigorous action is not taken in the future than in the past, there will be a complete strangulation of traffic, for saturation point has almost been reached. This is largely due to the increase of vehicles of all sorts, and also to an increase in the travel habit. Only about 280 miles of important new roads have been constructed in the country during the last seven years—an average of about 40 miles a year—and those were mostly by-passes. Yet the roads in Great Britain are the most densely trafficked in the world—there being 13·7 motor vehicles other than motor cycles per mile of road, compared with 9·7 in the United States, 7·0 in Germany, 5·6 in France, 3·0 in Italy and 0·2 in Japan. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of a vastly accelerated programme of road construction and improvement.
- Q. 1660.
 Q. 2904.
 Q. 1151.
 Q. 3342.

One representative area to be selected and subsidised.

- Q. 4419. 93. The Committee consider that it would be of advantage if the Ministry of Transport would select and subsidise a representative district as a show area. The extra expense of this experiment should not fall on the local rates. In that area everything of the best that is known should be introduced with regard to road surfaces, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, cycle tracks, traffic lights, general lighting, road signs, the treatment of acute bends and corners, and the elimination of crossings by constructing roundabouts fly-over bridges or tunnels. It would be of assistance to all those concerned with road improvement if they were enabled to inspect and study such an area. It is not economical for each authority to undertake its own experiments. This will, however, have to be done, unless the latest devices for road improvement can be exhibited in a practical laboratory such as the Committee suggest.
- Q. 1483. The Committee consider that an intensified campaign of propaganda and of the motor patrol system should be undertaken in this area.

Priority of Schemes.

94. There should be a list kept by each local authority— Q. 6635.
 and by the Ministry of Transport, where Trunk Roads are
 concerned—which should set out the order of priority in which
 road improvements ought to be undertaken. If it is reported that Q. 6636.
 a number of accidents have been caused by a defect in the
 layout of a road, the local authority and the Ministry should
 be advised to that effect, and any grant which was to have
 been made for other improvements should have a certain
 amount earmarked for the improvement of that particular spot.
 If, for instance, an authority had applied for a grant of £10,000
 for certain improvements, the Ministry should say that
 the amount would be paid, but that it would be contingent
 on the danger spot being given priority over other im-
 provements, unless indeed these were equally important from an
 accident point of view. The Committee go so far as to
 recommend that the Ministry of Transport should have power
 to insist on certain improvements being made before any other
 work is done, if they are satisfied that these improvements
 require priority.

Traffic Accident Maps.

95. The Committee were much impressed by a visit which
 they paid to the Traffic Accident Map Room at New Scotland
 Yard. They consider that the soundest method of deciding on
 the priority which should be given to road improvement and
 construction would be to study the density and severity of acci-
 dents as shown on these charts. The Committee recommend
 that every local authority should have similar maps. They
 would be of great assistance to Road Inspectors in their investi-
 gations (see para. 103).

Misfeasance and Nonfeasance.

96. In Scotland there is no distinction in law between mis- Q. 4388.
 feasance and nonfeasance. In England there is this curious
 anomaly—that, while the victim of an accident can bring an Q. 4385.
 action against the authority responsible for road repairs badly
 done, he cannot bring an action for repairs which have not been
 executed at all. In other words, an act of commission is action-
 able, but an act of omission is not. The Committee think that Q. 4942.
 the law of England should be brought into line with the law of
 Scotland in this respect. In the opinion of the Committee, the
 effect of such a change in the law, whereby a road user could
 bring an action against an authority based on non-feasance,
 would be beneficial, and would go far to compel Authorities to
 remedy bad road conditions.

Co-ordination of Highway Authorities.

Qs. 4720-1.
Q. 4857.

97. The Committee recommend that there should be complete co-ordination between all those who are concerned in highway administration. The sporadic efforts of innumerable local authorities are not and never can be satisfactory. One of the principal drawbacks resulting from the present lack of co-ordination is that it is impossible for any large-scale programme to be carried out. The Ministry has no real control over highway authorities. The amount of money which can be spent on roads is governed not so much by the grants which the local authorities can obtain from the Ministry as by the amount which each authority is prepared itself to contribute. The only control which the Ministry can now exercise is that of withholding grants from local authorities if they fail to conform to the standards laid down by the Ministry.

Qs. 7340,
7375.

More Class 1 Roads should be classified as Trunk Roads.

98. Another step which the Committee consider should be taken is to classify as Trunk Roads more of the Class 1 roads which are primarily used for through traffic, thereby bringing them under the control of the Ministry. This will save local authorities the contribution towards the maintenance of the roads which they pay at present out of their rates, thus releasing more funds for the improvement of the remaining Class 1 and Class 2 roads.

Pending any alteration of the present system in the direction of a greater degree of central control, the Committee consider that, when contemplating the construction or improvement of Class 1 roads which do or may form part of a larger system, local authorities should consult adjoining authorities, with the object of attaining the maximum degree of uniformity in construction. Even so without complete co-ordination it will be difficult under the present system to lay down any long term programmes for Class 1 roads, as they can only be dealt with adequately by well considered schemes spread over a term of years on a national basis.

Control of arterial roads in London should be vested in a central authority.

99. It will be seen that the Committee are of opinion that the control of the construction, improvement and maintenance of arterial roads should be confided to larger administrative units than at present. They regret that it was not found possible to include the county of London and other county boroughs within the provisions of the Trunk Roads Act, 1936, for, in their opinion, central control, even if not vested in the Ministry, is more important in the case of county boroughs than in that of rural districts. The control in London of arterial

roads ought, in the opinion of the Committee, to be withdrawn from over one hundred existing highway authorities, and vested in a central body such as the London County Council. The problem of the unification of highway control, however, cannot be considered as coming within the orbit of this enquiry, except to the extent of recording that the Committee are of opinion that adoption of the principle of centralised control of arterial roads will assist, by an increase in the uniformity of road construction, in bringing about a reduction in the number of road accidents.

Appointment of Traffic Adviser.

100. The Committee have been impressed throughout their enquiry by the fact that the Ministry appears to be out of touch with the practical day-to-day problems of traffic control. The Committee consider that the police are the only body who can, from the nature of their experience and duties, have a practical knowledge of the problem, and they consider that a police representative should be attached to the Minister as Traffic Adviser. He should be a man of considerable seniority, and his advice should be sought on all traffic questions.

Road Safety Research Board.

101. The Committee recommend that there ought to be set up a Road Safety Research Board. The Board should be, so far as possible, an independent body, but it should work in co-operation with the Ministry of Transport, the Police, and Local Authorities. Close contact should also be maintained by the Board with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and with the Medical Research Council in the examination of all road problems. The Committee do not think it possible to allocate administrative duties to the Board. It should conduct research work, and it should be advisory in its character. It should however be under a statutory obligation to issue reports as often as necessary, at any rate once a year. These should, where necessary, contain recommendations for executive action by the Ministry of Transport. The Committee do not propose to suggest in detail the activities of the Board, but it is clear that the subjects of Road Users, Road Improvement and Road Vehicles open up a large field for investigation. These should be surveyed periodically by the Board, and recommendations should follow for the improvement of road safety. Q. 3733.

Road Inspectors and more Accident Officers to be appointed by Ministry of Transport.

102. The Ministry of Transport should appoint road inspectors and additional accident officers who would, *inter alia*, provide the Road Safety Research Board with material for research.

The difference between the two classes of officer is that the primary duty of a road inspector should be to survey the roads with the object of preventing accidents from happening, whereas that of an accident officer should be to investigate accidents after they have occurred.

Both road inspectors and accident officers should be skilled drivers, with technical knowledge of road construction. They should be senior men, and they should be given adequate remuneration.

Q. 6510.

Duties of Road Inspectors.

Q. 3011.

Q. 3461.

Q. 4877.

Q. 7311.

Q. 4404.

Q. 734.

103. The Committee are of opinion that road inspectors should have duties analogous to those of factory inspectors. They should undertake a regular and systematic survey of the roads, in order to decide the most effective measures which should be taken to avoid accidents. The Ministry and Road Authorities seem in many instances to-day to wait until a number of accidents have taken place at a particular point rather than to anticipate the hazards, and to take proper measures in advance for their prevention. It has been demonstrated beyond doubt that factory inspectors have reduced the number of accidents in industry, and the Committee think that beneficial results would in the same way accrue from the system of road inspection which they recommend. There should, among these inspectors, be experts whose duty it would be to visit other countries, in order to keep in touch with traffic control conditions elsewhere, and with the latest ideas for the promotion of safety on the roads.

Duties of Accident Officers.

104. There are at present too few accident officers. More should be appointed. These officers should report on all major road accidents. The Committee recommend that they should investigate all the contributory causes of accidents, rather than concentrate on finding out who was primarily to blame, with a view to prosecution. This should enable the authorities concerned to remove or at any rate abate contributory causes of accident. When defects on roads other than trunk roads have contributed to accidents, the facts do not at present necessarily come under the cognisance of the Ministry. It should be the duty of these officers to report dangerous roads and black spots. If the condition of these roads and black spots is not put right within a reasonable period, it should be within the power of the Ministry to order the offending section of the road to be closed.

The Minister has not, in the opinion of the Committee, exercised sufficiently his right to cause enquiry to be made into particular accidents. Consequently the statistics are not at present

such as to enable definite conclusions to be reached. The Q. 5576. statistics are recorded regardless of population, road mileage, density of traffic, or vehicle mileage. The Road Safety Research Board should consider these statistics in their various aspects and implications. There are discrepancies or differences which require investigation, such as comparison between different counties and different towns, the accident ratio between commercial vehicles and private cars, why Edinburgh, Glasgow and Birmingham should show such different results, and so on.

2. Autobahnen.

Visit of Roads Delegation to Germany.

105. The German Roads Delegation visited Germany in Q. 4443. September, 1937, on the invitation of the Inspector-General of German Highways, for the purpose of inspecting the roads of Germany, and in particular the autobahnen. It was an influential delegation of 224 persons, including 57 members of both Houses of Parliament, representatives of the Automobile Association, the Royal Automobile Club, the British Road Federation, in collaboration with the Parliamentary Road Group, and many other bodies. The Delegation was impressed Q. 4465. with the enormous road task which Germany had set before it, and the thoroughness with which the task had been tackled.

Description of motorway system.

106. Germany has now over 1,500 miles of autobahnen open for traffic, and hopes by 1942 to have opened 4,300 miles. The Qs.4458-60. outstanding impressions of the Delegation related to the safety, efficiency and even beauty of these roads. They are run through open country, and are thus away from the towns. They are intended to be trunk roads for through traffic. They have dual carriageways, each way being wide enough to hold two lines of traffic, one a slow line, and the other an overtaking line. There are well-planned junctions, good visibility, gradual bends, super-elevation at corners, fly-over bridges, tunnels, and Qs.4475-76. easy gradients. There is rigid exclusion from these roads of all traffic other than motor traffic. Even pedestrians are not allowed to cross them except by bridge or tunnel. There is also prohibition of frontage access, advertisements or occupation by public utility services other than controlled petrol stations. It is not possible to give a more detailed description of the autobahnen in this Report, but it will be found in the published evidence which the representatives of the delegation gave to the Committee on 24th May, 1938.

Reduction of Accidents.

- Q. 4499. 107. Germany claims that the construction of autobahnen has resulted in a reduction of persons killed, during 1935-7, by 34 per cent., on roads of all types, although the number of motor vehicles had increased by 32 per cent. This affords striking proof of the incontrovertible proposition that road improvement is of tremendous assistance in reducing the toll of the roads. Another heartening result was that 65 per cent. of the traffic was diverted from the old roads to the new autobahnen, and that the number of accidents per million motor vehicle kilometres on the new autobahnen was only 17 per cent. of those on the old State roads.
- Q. 4494.

Cost.

- Q. 4535. 108. The autobahnen were said to have cost, taking the trading rate of the mark as 12, £34,000 a mile. In considering that figure it must, however, be borne in mind that the rate of pay to workers in Germany is less than it is in this country. Moreover, the roads in Germany are constructed more quickly and more cheaply than in England. This is partly due to the fact that in Germany they use 2 or 3 inches less thickness of concrete than here, and partly because the machinery employed in Germany is more up to date and more economical than it is in this country. The acquisition of the necessary land in Germany was arranged by arbitration, backed by compulsory powers, and there were also arrangements for the exchange of lands where there had been severance.
- Q. 4551.

Delegation recommend system for Great Britain.

- Q. 4576. 109. The Delegation, as a result of their investigation, reported to the Ministry of Transport that they had come to the conclusion that a national scheme should be framed without delay in England for a series of motorways, assigned for execution in an ordered sequence, as supplemental to the existing highway system, that the construction of such special motorways was feasible, and that their need was urgent. The Delegation included pedestrians and cyclists, and—a remarkable fact—their conclusions were unanimous. It was pointed out by the Delegation that the trunk road from London to Birmingham is already passing through many built-up areas, and to widen it might cost from £70,000 to £100,000 a mile, whereas, in their opinion, it might be less costly to construct a new motorway through open country, retaining, of course, the old road, improved, as far as possible, for local and non-motor traffic.
- Q. 4580.

Difference between conditions in Germany and in Great Britain.

110. In the opinion of the Committee, the Delegation did not sufficiently consider how their scheme for a series of motorways in this country could be carried out. In their whole-

hearted admiration for the way in which Germany had attacked the problem they did not bear in mind to a sufficient degree the fundamental differences between Germany and Great Britain. Great Britain is a small country, much more intensely cultivated, and far more densely populated than Germany. The people of this country would be asked to approve the expenditure of vast sums of money which might be represented in some quarters as being for the convenience of and in the interest of one section of the community only—namely motorists. Further, a number of these broad motor roads stretching through England would involve a large surrender of land, for it must be remembered that it would not be feasible to convert any existing thoroughfares except certain by-passes into motorways. It cannot, however, in the opinion of the Committee, be said that the construction of such roads in England is impossible, for it should be remembered that, although the difficulties are now much greater, similar procedure was adopted when railways were constructed. It would not, however, be easy in this country to acquire land by the methods adopted in Germany. Nor is it certain that in this country such a volume of traffic would be attracted to motor roads as in Germany. On the other hand, the Committee were impressed by the unanimity of view expressed by an important and representative Delegation, and by the striking diminution in road casualties which has resulted in Germany from the construction of the autobahnen.

Experimental motorway should be constructed.

III. The Committee do not, therefore, wish to discourage the building of motorways. They recognise the immense benefits which have accrued from them in Germany. The Committee are not, however, prepared to recommend a national scheme for building a series of motorways forthwith. If a suitable route could be selected, they would like to see an experimental motorway constructed. Evidence was given by a representative of the Ministry of Transport that a motorway from London to Birmingham might cost between six and seven million pounds sterling. This does not seem to the Committee to be an unduly large outlay, if it were to result, as in Germany, in a large diminution in the number of accidents. On the success of this experiment would depend the question whether further motorways should be built. The Committee do not desire to prejudge the matter. If the experiment which the Committee suggest is tried out, the effect of that motorway on road safety, and on road transport generally throughout the whole area served, should be the subject of careful statistical and scientific examination. It should be ascertained whether a greater measure of road safety had been attained, not only on the motorway, but

Q. 7498.

throughout the district of which it would be, so to speak, the watershed. If the experimental motorway should fail as such, it might revert to being an ordinary trunk road.

A study should be made of the modern road construction machinery now in use abroad, with the object of ascertaining whether the cost of constructing autobahnen in this country could be reduced by employing the latest methods.

3. Roads in Areas not Built Up.

Trunk Roads.

- Q. 3344. 112. The Committee are of opinion that the powers delegated to the Ministry under the Trunk Roads Act, 1936, should be used with energy and despatch. Since the Act came into operation there has been less work done on trunk roads than during the preceding five years. The Committee were assured that by the end of 1938 a 20-year programme would have been worked out by the Ministry. They think that, where new trunk roads or by-pass motorways are contemplated, it should be borne in mind that, where possible, they should run alongside railway lines. The Committee also consider that in the construction of all new roads the Ministry should put into operation the recommendations which are contained in their memorandum 483. It was stated by one witness that in his county (Oxfordshire) three out of every four accidents which had occurred would not have taken place, if the roads had been designed and constructed in accordance with the recommendations contained in that memorandum.
- Qs. 7434, 7441. Qs. 1044, 1185. Q. 893.

Improvement of existing main roads and construction of new roads to be carried on simultaneously.

113. The Committee do not suggest any priority as between the construction of new trunk roads or motorway by-passes and the improvement of existing main roads. They realise that questions of priority must always be decided on the merits of each particular case, and they do not wish, by encouraging the construction of new roads of any type, to suggest that efforts for the improvement of existing roads should be relaxed.

Side Roads.

114. The Committee consider that, generally speaking, the improvement of rural lanes and unimportant side roads should be given no priority over work on major roads. They have come to this decision, partly because of the desirability of preserving rural amenity, partly because they think that, unless enormous expense is incurred, the more traffic that is attracted to these roads, the more accidents will occur, and, finally,

because they believe that, with the high banks, limited widths and blind corners which are characteristic of these roads, road users travel so cautiously that few accidents occur on them.

Further Recommendations.

The Committee now pass to certain recommendations for road improvement which they consider desirable. Although the majority of these recommendations affect roads in areas not built-up, it is evident that they are in some cases applicable also to built-up areas.

Dual Carriage-ways.

115. The Committee strongly recommend that dual carriageways should be constructed wherever feasible. During the year 1936-7 there were in Great Britain 454 head-on collisions, many of which were avoidable. In the opinion of the Committee, dual carriageways would result in the reduction of accidents. They were told in evidence of the Glasgow City Boundary—Harthill road. The first sector consists of six miles of dual carriageway, and this carries 34 per cent. more traffic than the second sector, which consists of 15 miles of single carriageway. From 1933-6 inclusive only four persons were killed on the first sector, while 31 were killed on the second sector. Another example was given in evidence of a road in which a dual carriageway was laid. In the year preceding this work there were fifteen accidents on the road, and during the following year there were only two. The arguments in favour of dual carriageways are indeed so obvious that the Committee will not further stress them. They can see no objection to the proposal now made unless it be lack of space or lack of finance. One of the difficulties in persuading local authorities to construct such roads is that the Ministry of Transport offer to a County Council a $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. grant only, if they construct dual carriageways, as compared with a 60 per cent. grant if they construct single carriageways. A dual carriageway costs from 75 per cent. to 100 per cent. more to construct than does a single carriageway; and County Councils scarcely begin to be compensated for their enterprise by the extra $6\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. granted by the Ministry. Q. 2870. Q. 3333. Q. 1311.

Staggering of cross roads.

116. The Committee recommend that, where minor roads cross major roads, they should be staggered. Qs. 3259-61. Qs. 6529-30.

Circular islands and roundabouts.

117. The Committee consider that where two roads of major importance cross each other, traffic islands, which should be as large as possible, are safer than staggered crossings. Q. 5084.

- Q. 6099. The Committee are in favour of the provision at busy traffic points and dangerous crossroads of roundabouts, where space can be found for their construction. There are, of course, many of these already in existence, and their presence has resulted in a considerable reduction of accidents at the places where they have been constructed.

Pedestrian crossings on unrestricted roads.

- Q. 7939. 118. There should be no marked pedestrian crossings on unrestricted roads except at danger points. These crossings should be controlled by traffic signals with, in addition, pedestrian traffic signals, the observance of which should be compulsory (see paragraph 143). Where this is not a suitable arrangement, ramped bridges or subways should be substituted.

Improvement of road surfaces.

- Q. 748. 119. A source of danger, especially in wet weather, is the large variety of road surfaces which a driver may encounter. Q. 3114. Few drivers are competent to distinguish between their relative slipperiness. The sooner the experimental stage can be got over, and a uniform gripping surface discovered, the better. Q. 3115. It should, if possible, be light coloured. Q. 4944. When authorities cannot afford to re-surface great lengths of roads, they should at least renew them at bends, corners, crossroads, and crossings. Q. 4259. Even now, where new roads are being made, types of surface known to be conducive to skids are still being laid. Wood is sometimes employed, particularly in built-up areas. This seems to the Committee to be inexcusable.

Priority of traffic on roads.

- Q. 6796. 120. The Committee are of opinion that the Ministry of Transport should decide forthwith the priority of roads in country districts, where one of them is a trunk road or a Class I road. The Committee consider that the time has now come for legislation giving definite precedence to traffic on those roads which can be accorded priority. The Committee recommend that the position and number of "Halt" signs in areas not built-up should be reviewed. These are at present placed somewhat indiscriminately and they should be removed, except where their presence is essential to road safety. At the junction there should be a white line across the minor road, as is usually the practice at present. The Committee think that this is likely to remind the driver of his responsibility to give way to traffic on the priority road.

- Qs. 1199-200, 2458, 5596, 6839. It is desirable that, so far as possible, traffic should be kept moving on the roads which have priority. The number of signs on these roads should be reduced to a minimum, and they should be of standard pattern. It will, however, be necessary, Q. 3731.

even on roads having priority, to put up "Blind Corner" signs where minor roads enter at a point at which fast moving traffic on the priority road may not have a sufficient opportunity, after coming round a bend, to see and be seen by the minor road traffic in time for the latter to give way.

Cycle tracks.

121. The Committee regret to say that they regard the attitude of the majority of the representatives of cyclists' clubs towards cycle tracks as unreasonable. Their point of view seems to be that cyclists should not be excluded from the King's Highway, and that, if they were relegated to cycle tracks, it would not only abridge their rights, but would make cycling less enjoyable. They appear to pay little or no attention either to the risk they themselves run, or to the danger to which they expose other road users. In spite, however, of the intransigent point of view adopted by some of their leaders, a census shows that the great majority of cyclists use the tracks provided for them. There are, however, only 45 miles of cycle tracks in existence, and 68 miles under construction, out of a total of 180,000 miles of road in Great Britain. The Committee consider that, wherever possible, cycle tracks should be constructed, particularly on arterial roads which are intended for fast motor traffic. They should be of adequate width, 9 or even 12 feet broad, and of good surface.

In large towns the volume of cycle traffic often becomes automatically "one-way traffic", as in the morning people go to work at factories outside those towns, and in the evening they return home. In such cases it may be safer for cyclists to use one broad cycle track in both directions rather than to be obliged to cross the road in great numbers. Normally, however, there should, where feasible, be a cycle track on both sides of the carriageway. Their use should be made obligatory where they are satisfactory, except, of course, when the cyclist is turning to cross the road. Failure to use them should be made an offence. In Belgium and in Holland cycle tracks are marked in certain cases "Obligatory", and in other cases "Not obligatory". This practice might well be followed in Great Britain. Cycle tracks are still in an experimental stage, and the existing tracks stand in need of improvement. Particular attention must be paid to cross roads, for 75 per cent. of the accidents in which cycles are involved occur there. It is essential that where entrances to carriage drives, houses, etc., cross a cycle track at a lower level, the level of the track surface should prevail.

There are many rights of way, bridle paths and disused roads, such as parts of the Fosse Way, throughout the country. In many cases they are short cuts from one village or town to

Q. 598.

Q. 135.

Q. 145.

Q. 147.

Qs. 836.

2309, 2907,

4260, 5123,

6050.

Q. 1006.

Q. 1166.

Qs. 768,

837, 855,

921, 2312,

2908, 3240,

3651, 4260,

4399, 5284,

5538, 6050,

7255.

Qs. 135,

764-5, 1006,

3651.

another. The Committee consider that, where feasible, these might be turned into cycle tracks. This would increase the pleasure of cycling, and would reduce the volume of traffic on the main roads.

The Committee are also of the opinion that, when roads are widened, it would improve the amenities—an effect which has already been achieved in some instances—if existing hedges were allowed to remain, and cycle tracks and footpaths were put on the other side of the hedge. The segregation of carriageways would thus be increased. Cycle tracks might also be taken behind petrol stations where possible. The owners of the latter would in all probability agree to this proposal.

Footpaths.

122. Out of 2,470 fatal accidents attributed to pedestrians in the year 1936-7 only 439 occurred in areas not built up. The problem, therefore, is not so acute as that with which the Committee will deal when they come to consider built up areas. An analysis of the latter figure shows that of these

145 were crossing the road heedless of traffic.

2 were boarding vehicles without due care.

21 were slipping, falling or attempting suicide.

83 were children under 7 years of age, of whom 65 were unaccompanied.

188 were in the carriageway unnecessarily, but presumably deliberately.

439

These accidents resulted in 442 deaths, of which 420 were deaths of pedestrians. It is difficult from these figures to avoid the conclusion that the accidents were due to human error or carelessness; but it may be assumed that, if an adequate footpath with a good surface had been provided, the lives of most of the 188 persons who seem to have been in the carriageway unnecessarily might have been saved, and many children's lives as well. The Committee are of opinion that, where pedestrians are involved in accidents while using a carriageway, beside which there is an adequate footpath, except for the purpose of crossing, their conduct should be regarded as affording *prima facie* evidence of carelessness against them. Wherever possible, footpaths should be provided. Particular attention should be paid to their surface, as in many cases, where footpaths are already in existence, they are not used on account of their roughness.

Q. 924.

Q. 2342.

Width of Roads.

123. The Development and Road Improvement Funds Act, 1909, authorised the Road Board to acquire land to a total width of 440 yards. The Committee were informed that this authority has never been acted upon. If it had been, many of the present difficulties in acquiring land, caused by intensive post-war building, would have been resolved. The Committee consider that the policy of the Ministry to acquire land to a width of 120 feet is insufficient, and they think that for important roads a minimum of 300 feet should be substituted.

Q. 1241.
Q. 1242.
Q. 1244.
Q. 1037.

The Committee consider that building frontages on main roads should be more effectively controlled than they are at present, as persons or vehicles emerging from them are a potential cause of accidents. Wherever possible agreements should be entered into with the owners, and they should be compensated for agreeing that the land should not be used for building. It must, however, be pointed out that in many cases County Councils cannot, under existing arrangements, afford to do this. It was stated in evidence that on the Barnet by-pass it would cost £51,000 to sterilise a distance of just over one mile.

Cambering.

124. Roads should not be too heavily cambered, for the motorist, if he gets into the gutter, has an uncomfortable list, or he may strike an overhanging tree. Consequently he is inclined to keep several feet from the kerb, thereby not only wasting several feet of road, but tending to make overtaking by vehicles following him a risky performance. This applies in particular to the case of cyclists, who cannot be expected to ride on a bad surface.

Q. 4274.
Q. 6093.
Q. 6559.

All corners on main roads should, if possible, be banked or super-elevated. The effect would be that drivers, instead of clinging to the middle of the road when going round a corner, as they do where roads are steeply cambered, would keep to their proper side of the road. If the roads were properly banked, motorists would be able to stay on their own side, and would avoid cutting the corner.

Q. 749.

White lines.

125. The Committee think that white lines are of great assistance in promoting safety. They should be laid down wherever possible. These lines are useful from the point of view of safety after dark and in fog, because a driver can see the white line

Q. 3263.

on his right hand when he is driving. These lines might also be marked by "cat's eyes" at night. There should also be standardisation of the distance at which the broken white line ends and the continuous white line commences when approaching a bridge or a narrow portion of the road. At present, in some cases, the continuous line commences 25 yards from a bend; in another case it may be 50 yards. This leads to confusion and danger.

Until dual carriageways are universal, all important roads should be divided by painted strips into two or four tracks according to their width.

Q. 3574.

White lines which mark three-track roads should be changed without delay. They are extremely dangerous. Traffic proceeds in single file on either side of the road, and the middle part becomes a lane for overtaking traffic from both directions. This tends to promote head-on collisions.

Fly-over Junctions and Tunnels.

Q. 1048.

126. There should be considerable extension in the use of fly-over crossings or tunnels on the main roads of the country. Where such an improvement is prohibited by expense, steps should be taken to acquire sufficient land to enable their construction to be undertaken at a later date. The determining factor between the two alternatives would be that of cost.

Blind Corners.

Q. 3119.

127. The necessity for the elimination of blind corners on main roads is so obvious that the Committee need not stress it. These corners are gradually being removed, but the Committee urge that the efforts of all authorities concerned with this improvement should be redoubled. Although it is true that the danger is obvious, it is none the less true that the remedy has been neglected in many cases for years.

Kerbs.

Q. 1268.

128. The Committee recommend that in so far as possible the costly system of erecting kerbs which is in vogue to-day should cease, and that guard posts should be erected 18 inches outside the edges of roads, at suitable intervals, sloping outwards at an angle of 15° from the vertical, and provided with reflectors. This system has the advantage that there is a safe margin of 18 inches, and that, if the near wheels of a motor car get on to it, particularly in a fog, the driver can feel the little bit of extra pull on the tyre. Where owing to footpaths it is not feasible to remove kerbs, the Committee consider that they should be at an angle of 120° from the road. Otherwise there is a danger

Q. 5052.

of small cars being turned over, should they hit them. The kerbs should not be more than three inches high. Kerbs, like too heavy cambering, tend to make drivers keep away from them, which obstructs the rest of the traffic, and may render overtaking dangerous. Q. 1367. Q. 1881.

Safety Posts.

129. Safety posts should be erected on carriageways which run parallel with rivers or beside a steep fall of land, unless there is already some protection to guard vehicles in mist or fog from the risk of being driven over the edge. Q. 1127.

Level Crossings.

130. The Committee recommend that all level crossings on main roads should be bridged or tunnelled as soon as possible. Q. 6598.

Hump-back Bridges.

131. The Committee recommend that on important roads hump-back bridges should be abolished as soon as may be, for it is impossible to see approaching traffic until their summit has been reached. Q. 6598.

Road Signs.

132. The Committee endorse the recommendation made in the First Report of the Royal Commission on Transport, namely, that road signs should be uniform in colour and design and of the reflector type. Power should be given to the Ministry of Transport to compel the removal of all unauthorised signs. There are to-day too great a variety and too many obsolete signs. Informative signs are much more useful than danger signs. Q. 1078. Q. 3285. Q. 1085.

Green line warning 100 yards before road signs.

133. The Committee think that there is much to be said for the suggestion made to them by the Chairman of Committees that a green line should be painted across the left half of every road 100 yards before a road sign is reached, indicating to the driver that he is approaching such a sign. Signs are often missed, even by a careful driver. The suggested green line would minimise the consequent danger of accident. Q. 7508

Sign Posts.

134. The Committee recommend that sign-posting should be not only uniform but also more efficient. At present the driver often has to look up in order to see the signs, which are Q. 6556. Q. 3582.

generally above eye level, and he is thereby diverted from his proper occupation. Any such distraction by which the driver is apt to lose concentration is, in the opinion of the Committee, a source of danger.

Intelligent sign-posting and the lighting thereof is one of the matters which might well be studied by the Road Safety Research Board which the Committee has proposed. (See paragraph 101.)

There are many instances where busy centres could be avoided and destinations could be reached by detours, if signposts were more numerous and more informative than they are to-day, and if they indicated such alternative routes.

Stationary vehicles.

- Qs. 935-40. 135. The Committee are of opinion that adequate "lay-byes" and "draw-ins" for stationary commercial and passenger service vehicles should be made every few miles on the highway, and that the Ministry should contribute to the cost of their construction. Statutory restrictions are laid down, controlling the number of hours a day during which the driver of a commercial vehicle may drive, and it is therefore necessary for drivers to stop on the highway from time to time. The Committee were informed that it was found, on investigation of 205 fatal accidents occurring in one county during the $5\frac{1}{2}$ years ending 31st January, 1938, that in 24 cases (i.e., 12 per cent.) stationary vehicles were involved. Of these the stationary vehicle was run into from the rear in nine cases, seven of these being at night. In these instances improved rear lighting would have been of preventive value. In one of these cases the rear light was obscured by a hanging tail board. In 14 of the 24 cases, a bus stopping bay or lorry "lay-by" might have prevented the accidents. Of these 14 cases, buses were involved in 6, lorries and vans in 7, and a private car in 1. It is noteworthy that buses and commercial lorries and vans were, with this one exception, the only stationary vehicles involved in these 205 fatal accidents.
- Q. 2939.
- Q. 2942.

Telegraph and telephone poles and trees.

- Q. 6883. 136. The Committee are of opinion that telegraph and telephone poles are not only the cause of many accidents, but that accidents are often rendered more serious and even fatal, by the presence of these poles too near to the carriageway. In 56 counties during the last 18 months there have been 1,290 accidents, of which 81 were fatal, involving collision with telegraph or telephone poles.
- Q. 6882.

The Committee recommend that legislation should be introduced to enact:—

(1) that, where a road is unsuitable for telegraph or telephone poles, they should be put on private land or underground; Q. 6936.

(2) that where the Highway Authority can prove that existing telegraph or telephone poles are dangerous, they may require them to be removed at the cost of the Postmaster-General. As regards telegraph poles, under the existing law, the Minister is obliged to remove only those which were placed *in situ* prior to 1893. It is, however, difficult to establish the date when many poles were erected, as in early days telegraphs were in the hands of private companies. Q. 6938.

Trees, where they present a similar danger, should also be removed.

Lighting.

137. The question of lighting affects built-up areas more than areas not built-up, and the Committee will deal with it at that stage of their Report. With reference, however, to the lighting of by-pass roads and important highways, particularly continuous highways, the Committee recommend that they should be under one overhead authority, in order to secure a uniform standard of lighting. Q. 4268.

Lighting-up time.

138. The present lighting-up time is a survival from the days of slow moving traffic. The Committee consider that it is not now always safe, particularly in bad weather, and that accordingly lighting-up time should be reviewed by the proposed Road Safety Research Board.

Distance between slow-moving lorries on open roads.

139. Where there is a string of two or more lorries travelling at a slow speed on an open road the failure to allow sufficient space between them to enable faster moving traffic to overtake in safety should be made an offence. Very often several large lorries with trailers are to be seen driving close together at a maximum speed of 20 m.p.h. This is a source of irritation to motorists and tempts them to take risks, and to pass the lorries when it is not safe to do so. Q. 6075.

Rule of the Road.

140. It should be an obligation on the part of all drivers of vehicles to drive on the left hand side of the road and to give way to traffic coming up on the right hand side. Drivers of vehicles, other than cycles, should so far as is possible overtake other vehicles on the right hand side. Q. 1072.

(4.) Roads in Built-Up Areas.

Distinction between streets and main thoroughfares leaving towns.

141. The Committee draw a distinction between ordinary streets and main thoroughfares by which traffic leaving a town for the country, or *vice versa*, passes. Many of the recommendations in the foregoing paragraphs relating to areas not built-up apply to those thoroughfares. In the case of London, Sir Charles Bressey, in his recent Report, outlined schemes for five motorways radiating from it. It is impossible for the Committee to go into detail in this Report regarding these proposals. They recommend urgently, however, that a report similar to the Bressey Report should be made for each large town, and that it should be acted on without avoidable delay. In the meantime the Committee urge that the recommendations of the Bressey Report should, where feasible, receive effect.

As regards streets, the Committee have a number of recommendations to make.

Congestion.

Q. 1864.

142. It may be thought that some of these recommendations touch more on congestion than on reduction of accidents. The Committee consider, however, that these two problems are interdependent. If the worker's daily journey is made difficult by an inadequate supply of roads—inadequate to the rush hours—then the workers will certainly pack in as near to their employment as possible. It is that packing in of the industrial population which sets up congestion, and, in the words of the London Traffic Advisory Committee, congestion and accidents are very closely related. This view can also be substantiated by a study of the traffic accident maps at Scotland Yard.

*Pedestrian Crossings.*Q. 3087.
Q. 3151.
Q. 4397.

143. The Committee were invited by witnesses to recommend that the observance of traffic light signals and of police directions at and in the neighbourhood of pedestrian crossings should, if a pedestrian wishes to cross by one of them, be made compulsory. The Committee have carefully considered the practicability of this proposal. They are in favour of it in theory, but they are impressed both with the difficulty of enforcing such a regulation, and with the fact that, when a crossing is light-controlled, and for the moment no traffic is approaching, it would be unreasonable to expect pedestrians to wait for the green light. The Committee abstain therefore from making a

general recommendation that the observance of traffic light signals by pedestrians should be enforced. Nevertheless they consider that in exceptional cases this should be done. Where a crossing is known to be highly dangerous, and ramped bridges or subways are not feasible, the Committee consider that pedestrian signals in the opposite sense to the traffic light signals should be attached at eye level to the column of the main traffic signals. These should be clearly indicated, and compliance with them, if crossing within a few yards of them, should be made obligatory.

At other places, where pedestrian signals are not installed, traffic signals should not be shielded in such a manner that it is difficult for pedestrians to see them when they desire to cross.

The Committee are not in favour of pedestrian operated signals, although they realise that there may be exceptional cases, when there is a long stretch of road with a continuous stream of traffic, where they might with advantage be employed.

The Committee are of the opinion that, if a pedestrian is involved in an accident while crossing the street near but not on a crossing, the *onus* of proving negligence in a claim for damages by him should be on him, for he could have taken advantage of the protection afforded to him by the pedestrian crossing.

In connection with these recommendations it should be noted that the Minister already has power to make pedestrians, within 100 yards of a pedestrian crossing, use it, but this is yet another power which he has not exercised.

There is at present some confusion in the minds of road users as to the respective rights and obligations of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the various types of crossing. The Committee consider, particularly if the foregoing recommendations are adopted, that clearer instructions should be issued and that they should be reinforced by propaganda. The Committee are of opinion that propaganda if efficiently and thoroughly employed would do much to bring home to pedestrians the dangers which they run and the risks to which they expose fellow road users by the heedless crossing of roads and streets.

Pedestrians crossing beacons, island rests or refuges.

144. Beacons should be illuminated at night. Q. 4818.

All pedestrian crossings should, where feasible, be provided with at least one island rest. Qs. 4818, 510.

Where a street is wide enough for four lines of traffic there should be three island rests at each crossing—that is, one between each line of traffic. Each rest should have on it a thin bollard, 3 feet high, which should be illuminated at night. Qs. 4015, 5557, 6540.

This would not only make crossing easier for the pedestrians, but would also make traffic more orderly.

Care should, however, be taken to avoid an excess of light, which might have a blinding effect upon the driver.

Qs. 3969,
3974.

It should be made illegal to overtake at pedestrian crossings.

Surfaces of pedestrian crossings.

145. Steel studs should be removed from pedestrian crossings. They are slippery in wet weather, and they are dangerous to cyclists and pedestrians. The cyclist is occupied in avoiding them at the moment when he should be paying attention to other traffic. Pedestrians also stumble and slip on these studs. A good substitute is that of "cats eyes." In addition, coloured plates should be laid over the surface of the crossing. They should either be yellow and black, in which case they would be seen in all weathers from a considerable distance, or all yellow, which is also effective.

Qs. 3811,
6623.

Qs. 5086,
6114.

Q.s 3815.
5086.

Guard Rails.

146. Many guard rails have been erected in London and other towns. The Committee recommend that more of these should be erected at places where it is undesirable that the pedestrian should go on to the carriageway. There is at present a reluctance on the part of local authorities to spend money on guard rails. They are, however, of great value in busy streets, where there is a heavy traffic flow. The Committee consider that a large percentage of the cost of these rails should be paid by the Ministry of Transport. The Committee recognise that there is considerable opposition to guard rails from a variety of sources. There are those who consider them an infringement of the rights of the pedestrian, while commercial interests affirm that it makes their shops difficult to approach, but, in the judgment of the Committee, the most substantial objection relates to access to omnibuses. It is not always possible for an omnibus to stop exactly opposite an opening. Where this cannot be done, passengers have to make their way between the railings and the traffic, and this creates danger. To make omnibuses stop before the guard rails commence would put passengers, especially in wet weather, to some inconvenience. For these reasons the Committee think that where possible there should be openings in the guard rails for the use of omnibus passengers. They consider that, where there are gaps in guard rails for pedestrian crossings, bars should be provided which would hold back pedestrians when the traffic signals are against them, and which would open automatically at the appropriate time, like the doors of trains on the tube railways. Experiments are at present being made with these. The Committee also consider that guard rails should always be erected outside entrances to schools which are situated on main thoroughfares.

Qs. 2335,
3000, 5555.

Q. 3275.

Q. 3542.

Q. 5105.

Q. 4311.

Qs. 509,
598.

Q. 630.

Ramped shallow subways and bridges.

147. A greater number of these should, in the opinion of the Committee, be erected. The Committee consider that subways are more suitable than bridges, but it is essential that they should be ramped, as people, and in particular old people, do not care to use flights of steps, nor can they be used by perambulators. The approach to them should be flanked by guard rails, in order to prevent pedestrians from crossing the road at those points.

Qs. 567,
2333, 3220.

Q. 3224.
Qs. 570,
3096.
Q. 3003.

Parking Places.

148. All dangerous parking places should be abolished. Where vehicles can safely be allowed to wait in a street, they should be permitted to remain for a limited period only, and, generally speaking, only unilateral waiting should be allowed. Where practicable opposite sides of the street should be used on alternate days. This device is more suitable to provincial towns than to London and other great cities, where the parking of owner-driven cars in busy streets should be discouraged as far as possible. At present, streets in big cities are filled with waiting cars all day long. The pedestrian is blamed when he steps from behind a stationary vehicle, but the proximate cause of the accident is in reality the standing vehicle which obscures the view of both the pedestrian and the motorist. During the year 1936-7, 13.5 per cent. of the total number of accidents involving personal injury to pedestrians were attributed to persons walking or running out in front of or behind a vehicle or other object which masked their movement. These are not, of course, all "parking" accidents, for many of them occurred to persons walking out in front or behind an omnibus or tram which was stationary for a short time only. Nevertheless, it is essential for local authorities to provide adequate parking grounds within central areas for people who come there on business. If necessary, they should be put underground, or above the street level. Doubtless the fees charged for them would pay for their acquisition and erection within a reasonable period. People who come in cars to shop and trade must be provided for. At present they frequently must leave their cars at places inconvenient to themselves, or they are harassed by the police. The police have either to pursue these vehicle owners or waste their time in trying to clear traffic in streets which are but ought not to be partially blocked by waiting vehicles. The Metropolitan Police recommend that there should be "no waiting" regulations on main streets, but, although these rules are already in force in some streets—Oxford Street, for instance—the Committee are

Q. 5170.

Q. 3403.

Q. 542.

Q. 5170.

Q. 5287.

Q. 541.

not prepared generally to recommend them for three reasons:—

(1) There is not at present sufficient parking accommodation for vehicles.

(2) It would take up too much police time to ensure that the regulations were obeyed.

(3) Such regulations would irritate the driving public to an unnecessary degree.

Q. 740.

It should, in the opinion of the Committee, be made an offence either to park a vehicle on a corner, a bend, or over the crest of a hill—in fact, in any position where an overtaking driver may not have time to pull up after he has come within sight of it. No parking should be allowed so near to a pedestrian crossing as to obscure the view of approaching vehicles by persons stepping on to it, or *vice versa*. It should also be an offence to leave a car at night on the wrong side of the road, as the lights are misleading to other traffic.

Lighting.

Q. 2377.

149. A better standard of lighting is required for road users than the standard of lighting which is necessary for police purposes in the interests of the prevention of crime. The Committee desire to point out that few of the recommendations of yet another Departmental Committee have resulted in adequate action being taken by the Ministry. They refer to the Departmental Committee on Lighting, which reported eighteen months ago. That Committee recommended that street lighting should be made uniform, particularly on Trunk and on Class I roads. At present there are sudden changes from central to side lighting, and equally sudden changes in the volume of lighting, all of which are distracting to road users, particularly to motorists. The Lighting Committee also recommended that the hundreds of authorities who have produced different kinds of street lighting upon one journey should be superseded by an overhead authority. In London there are to-day 117 highway authorities and nearly 100 local authorities. The Committee endorse the recommendations of the Lighting Committee, and recommend that they should be acted on as soon as possible. Lighting is one of innumerable road problems requiring co-ordination. The improvement in traffic fluidity which would result from a comprehensive improvement of main traffic arteries would do much to ease congestion and to reduce accidents. In some cases there are so many authorities, advisory committees, and statutory undertakings to consult before an improvement can be effected that it is carried out only after much delay, or, in some cases, not at all. In this network of

Qs. 4268,
5178.

Q. 486.

Qs. 1116-7.

authorities the only body whose advice, in the opinion of the Committee, is not sufficiently sought is that of the police, whose recommendations would be of great value.

Advertising by light signs.

150. Representations on this matter were made to the Ministry without effect, and as far back as 1933 a Departmental Committee on traffic signs recommended that there should be greater supervision over advertising signs which may be mistaken for light signals, and further that highway authorities should be given power to remove any obstacle such as trees or projecting shop-blinds and advertisements which tend to mask the light signals. The light signals themselves should be clear and unmistakable. Five years have passed, and nothing has yet been done by the Ministry to give effect to the recommendations made. The Committee consider that the powers proposed by the Departmental Committee should be conferred without further delay, and that, in addition, it should be made illegal, without the approval of the highway authority, to have red or green lights for advertisement purposes in close proximity to the carriageway. A red light should mean one thing and one thing only; stop—danger. A green light should mean, go ahead—no danger.

Qs. 6108,
6106.

Qs. 4376,
3595-6,
6583, 6952.

Street names and directions.

151. Another form of distraction to vehicle drivers is the irregularity in the placing and the lack of legibility of street names and directions. It is important that these should be of a distinctive nature and well lit, and that the driver or cyclist should know exactly where to look for them. All unnecessary street signs should be eliminated. In the opinion of the Committee the complications which they create are a potential source of accident.

Q. 1075.

Q. 1078.

Traffic signals.

152. These should gradually be replaced by larger lights than are at present in use. They should also be lower.

Q. 4376.

Traffic signals on the flexible progressive system.

153. The Committee think that a system of traffic signals on the great thoroughfares leaving large towns should be organised, so that, when a driver arrives in a controlled thoroughfare some miles in length, and sees a green light, he should go at a speed which should be advertised on the signal posts. As he approaches each traffic signal, he will, if he is going at the correct speed, go straight through. That means that a platoon of vehicles will be moving in that direction without having to

Q. 551.

stop. After each platoon has passed the traffic signal there will be ample time for pedestrians to cross before the next platoon arrives. To make this method safe and efficient there should also be pedestrian signals at these crossings, and it should be illegal for pedestrians to ignore them. This flexible progressive system could only be carried out on a large scale if the authorities concerned were co-ordinated.

“ Halt ” signs at major road ahead.

Qs. 6111,
4372.

154. The “ Halt ” sign should be adequately lit and either placed on both sides of the street, or on an obelisk in the centre of the street. At present the signs are almost always on the left hand side only, and they may easily be missed by a driver who is looking to his right for traffic coming along an intersecting road.

Electric light standards.

Q. 6950.

155. These are sometimes dangerously close to the carriage-way, and there is no provision in the Electricity (Supply) Acts to deal with the incidence of the cost of their removal. The Committee are of opinion that legislation should be introduced imposing upon the undertakers the cost of removal, where it is necessary for road safety. During the last 18 months there have been 827 accidents, of which 13 were fatal, involving collisions with light standards.

Q. 6879.

Public service vehicle stops.

Q. 6586.

156. The Ministry of Transport have power to say where an omnibus or tram stop shall be. The Committee understand that they seldom exercise this power. The Committee recommend that the siting of public service vehicle stops should be vested in the Chief Officer of Police, with a right of appeal by any undertaking affected to the Traffic Commissioners. There are many cases where omnibus or tram stops are on curves, in contravention of the Highway Code, and the owners are said to refuse to alter the stops because they consider the convenience of passengers rather than the convenience of other road users. In the opinion of the Committee this is a source of danger.

Q. 5109.
Qs. 6077,
6585.

Qs. 3281,
4308.

The Committee also recommend that, where possible, stops should be made as close as is consonant with safety to pedestrian crossings, for many passengers on alighting are inclined immediately to cross the street.

Ring roads.

Q. 2378.

157. The Committee are of the opinion that in large towns complete circles of an arterial road type should be provided. This principle would cause a circular flow of traffic, and

would obviate much of the delay arising from transverse movement across the central congested area, particularly from through traffic and from lorries and vans returning empty. In its most perfect form, such a ring road would be for the greater part an elevated road, without frontage access, having ramped connections to all important radial roads over which it passes. In a town of the size of London there might well be three concentric ring arteries. Q. 1850.

Alternative routes for cyclists.

158. Road authorities should indicate alternative routes which are available for cyclists, and so take them off the main streets. Local cyclists probably know these routes, but cyclists who are strangers to the locality would be helped by being able to find these alternative routes, which, though more or less parallel with the main thoroughfares, would be in quieter streets. The fear that "signal dodger" motorists would be inclined to follow these alternative cyclist routes, thereby defeating their object, would be considerably lessened if traffic could be kept on the move in main thoroughfares by the adoption of the flexible progressive system recommended in paragraph 153 of this Report. Q. 1851.

Service roads.

159. Where possible, service roads should be constructed on large thoroughfares. They would help to prevent children from running on to the main highway, and vans delivering goods and waiting cars could remain out of the highway, and allow the ordinary traffic to go up and down the road without hindrance. Q. 3122.

Schools, cinemas, etc., not to be built on main traffic routes.

160. Town planning authorities should plan areas from the point of view of traffic and of saving road casualties in the light of the latest knowledge available to them. They should, if possible, arrange that cinemas and places of that description should be erected inside building estates, and should be removed from the main traffic. The efforts which are already being made to ensure that sites for new schools should not abut on main traffic routes should be redoubled. Q. 598.
Q. 3339.
Q. 662.

Signs on side streets.

161. Many motor cyclists go to work in cities by back streets where side turnings are very numerous. The Committee consider that not nearly enough of these side streets have traffic signs. They are also needed on the alternative routes for pedal cyclists which are recommended in paragraph 158 of the Report. Q. 4344.

Tramway lines.

Q. 434^c.
 Qs. 4826,
 434^I, 578².
 Q. 7938.
 Q. 598.

162. All tramway lines are a source of danger to wheeled vehicles. The Committee consider that tramway lines should be removed as soon as they cease to be used. They become more dangerous after they have been abandoned than they were while they were in use. The Committee would go further, and would recommend that where possible trolley vehicles should be substituted for tramways. They were informed of one road where this change resulted in six months in a reduction of accidents by 33 per cent. The reason is, of course, that tramways often embark and set down their passengers in the middle of the road, while trolley vehicles do not.

Improvement of road surfaces.

Qs. 747,
 4338, 4826,
 4860.
 Q. 7933.

163. This subject has already been dealt with in paragraph 119, which deals with areas not built-up. The principal fault, as far as built-up areas are concerned, lies in the slippery surface of wooden setts. These should without delay be carpeted with some sort of non-skid material, particularly at the approach to pedestrian crossings.

Arcaded footpaths.

164. The Committee consider that, when rebuilding takes place in narrow streets, local authorities should insist, as far as practicable, on the building of arcaded pavements, recessed within the building line, thereby broadening the street without taking away housing space. Examples of this arcading are to be found in London under the Ritz Hotel, Piccadilly, and also at the lower end of Regent Street. In Chester there are the well-known Rows, which also give additional footpaths on the level of the first floor. These are carried across side streets by footbridges. They are of assistance in reducing the congestion of pedestrian traffic. Arcaded footpaths would enable roadways to be broadened, so as to include the original pavements.

Regional Committees to be set up.

165. The Committee consider that, in giving effect to these recommendations, it would be useful if regional committees—consisting of representatives of local authorities and the police—were formed to consider the existing situation, and to suggest ways and means for its improvement, and to encourage uniformity. These Regional Committees should refer problems to the Road Safety Research Board for consideration and solution.

PART III

VEHICLES

General

166. The Committee now pass to consider the problem of how vehicles can be so improved as to eliminate their defectiveness as a cause of accident. The Ministry in their statistics attribute only 3·6 per cent. of all accidents in the year 1936-7 to defects in vehicles or equipment. It must be remembered however that, when a vehicle is destroyed by an accident, it is not possible to rule out the chance that there may have been a defect in it which cannot be discovered from the debris. The problem, as the Committee have stated in paragraph 12, is being to a large extent solved by reason of the fact that the motor trade is competitive, as is the cycle trade. The general improvement in construction has also been facilitated by the co-operation which exists between the Ministry of Transport and the organisation representing manufacturers. Regulations have been framed in order to raise the standard of the less expert manufacturer, and to prevent him from supplying an indifferent article, in order to gain an advantage in price. Specifications have also been issued, and they are concurred in by the manufacturers, who have no wish to evade them.

Q. 38.

Q. 37.

Qs. 492,
5527.*Improvement in the construction of motor vehicles.*

167. The recommendations of the Committee in this part of their Report will be confined to the problem of making vehicles safer from a road accident point of view. When, in paragraph 21, they recorded their decision not to recommend the re-imposition of an universal speed limit, they did not lose sight of the potential danger which is implicit in the improvement of vehicles—namely the added speed, power and weight which they attain. The Committee consider that the danger to which they refer should be minimised by concentrating without delay on the improvement both in the conduct of road users and in road construction.

Q. 3795.

Technical improvements to be considered by Road Safety Research Board.

168. The problem of the improvements which, in the interests of safety, are required for vehicles should be considered by the proposed Road Safety Research Board. Reference to these will be found in the evidence. They are technical matters, with which the Committee cannot deal in detail, although they propose to make certain suggestions with regard to a few of them.

Q. 4727.

Qs. 4732-69.

1. Motor Vehicles

Certificates before sale of second-hand motor vehicles.

- Qs. 3515, 6177. 169. It should be obligatory, on the sale of a second-hand motor vehicle, that a certificate of fitness should be issued by an approved person, in particular with regard to the condition of the brakes. The Committee consider that only the police or persons approved by them should be empowered to sign these certificates. It would not be satisfactory if they were signed by any garage proprietor or other person selling the car.
- Qs. 6205-8.

Testing of brakes.

- Qs. 6145, 6069. 170. The Committee are of opinion that some Courts of Summary Jurisdiction do not inflict sufficient penalties for accidents caused by motor vehicles whose brakes are inefficient. These are a public danger, and lack of supervision of them should be treated as a serious offence. Although the Committee do not think that it would be practicable to insist on periodical testing of brakes, they nevertheless consider that the police should be empowered to stop any vehicle in order to make an examination of its brakes. The police should stop motorists whose brakes they believe to be inefficient, and also on occasion any other vehicle, just as they do in the case of lorries to-day when they wish to check their loads. The Committee would like to see brake testing machines instituted, as in America. Vehicles could then be stopped, put on the machine, and the efficiency of the brakes tested, so that it could be ascertained at once whether the brakes were in good condition and correctly balanced. If there were found to be an efficiency of less than 30 per cent., the owner should be subject to a fine. It is not only necessary to have good brakes; it is also essential that they should be properly balanced. Otherwise the risk of skidding is increased.
- Qs. 4782, 6658, 6172.
- Q. 6549.
- Q. 6657.
- Q. 6548.
- Q. 6547.

Doors.

171. If the drivers' doors, which are hinged at the back, fly open they are a source of great danger. The dictates of fashion and the necessity of reducing wind resistance are probably the reasons why they are usually hinged at the back. Motor cars tend to become low and streamlined, and it is therefore impossible for the front end of the driver's door to be vertical. The Committee believe that it is not possible to design a door, with more than one hinge, which will open outwards, unless the hinges are vertical. The Committee consider that doors on either side of the driver, if hinged at the back, create

danger sufficient to warrant the necessity for a change in the design of motor cars, so that the doors should be either hinged at the front or are made to slide. The Committee consider that it should be an offence to open the offside door carelessly. Qs. 3836, 4789.

Driver's seat and steering wheel.

172. The Committee are of opinion that in many modern cars the dashboard is so high and the driving seat so low that it is difficult to see the near-side wing. The Committee are of opinion that this defect should be remedied. Comfort and fashion should not be allowed to cause danger. Qs. 773, 3838.

The Committee also think that the steering wheel should not be too high. Drivers should be able to look over and not through the wheel. Q. 4952.

Horns.

173. Strident horns should not be permitted. They cause confusion and danger. The Ministry of Transport should, in the opinion of the Committee, make a regulation prohibiting the advertisements of such horns. The Departmental Committee on Noise in the Operation of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles in their report recommended a limitation of the power and noise of horns. No action, however, so far as the Committee is aware, has been taken by the Ministry on this Report. Qs. 6420, 6438, 6418, 6438, 6441.

Lights.

174. Intensive research should be made by the proposed Road Safety Research Board with regard to lights generally, and, in particular, with regard to the prevention of dazzle. The Committee consider that Regulations should be issued empowering the police to inspect the dipping mechanism. The use of this mechanism should be made compulsory. The Committee are of opinion that the position of obligatory lights should be standardised; that side lights should have a red lens at the back, that there should be a red light on the outside of the near-side lamp, and a green light on the outside of the off-side lamp. Qs. 934, 3244, 6577, 1125.

Lighting on commercial vehicles should be improved. Indication should be given by two sidelights and by two rear lights of the breadth of these vehicles. The use of traffic indicators should be compulsory, and they should be visible from behind. Q. 1390.

A lorry should be marked by red triangles both in front and behind. The presence of a trailer should also be plainly indicated, both in front of the vehicle and at the rear of the trailer, by a distinctive sign. Qs. 760-3.

Trams should be provided with " Stop " lights. Q. 3070.

2. Pedal Cycles

Efficiency of Brakes.

Q. 6205.
Qs. 282,
5136, 5533.
Q. 6208.
Qs. 7199-
202.

175. Cycles used upon the road should, in the opinion of the Committee, be made to conform to a standard of fitness, and regulations should be made requiring the provision of efficient brakes. The police should be empowered to enforce these regulations. Particular notice should be taken of tradesmen's cycles. In cases where an employee is found to be using a cycle with inadequate brakes the employer, not the employee, should be prosecuted.

Q. 2271.

Q. 6259.

The Ministry of Transport are empowered to make regulations as to the number, nature and use of brakes. The Committee do not understand why they have not done so. In the opinion of the Committee a use and construction order should be applied to cycles in the same manner as that which is applied at present to motor cars and motor cycles.

Handlebars and saddle.

176. The Committee consider that handlebars should not be fixed so low and the saddle so high as to involve a strain on the cyclist as he watches the road ahead of him.

CONCLUSION.

177. In concluding their Report, the Committee desire to reaffirm their realisation of the surpassing importance as well as the supreme difficulty of the problem with which they have been confronted. The holocaust on the roads to-day is nothing short of appalling, but, as the Committee have already indicated, it seems to be contemplated by the public in general with complacency. To achieve even a reduction in the number of road accidents raises issues of great complexity. The Committee do not claim to have solved the problem submitted to them; but they do claim to have made a contribution to its solution. The Committee have, as will be seen, made many recommendations—large and small—for the abatement of the mischief with which they were enjoined to deal. They are of opinion—as indeed they have stated in their Report—that the most important factors are the education of all road users in road behaviour and the segregation of road users—motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. The first factor is of course psychological, while the second is physical; both are of supreme national moment. If the recommendations now made receive effect, the Committee are confident that at least a beginning will be made in achieving increased road safety. Finally the Committee venture to express the hope that this report will not share the fate of the reports of several departmental committees of which they heard in evidence, and merely find a resting place in the pigeon-holes of Whitehall.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

PART I

ROAD USERS

1. General

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
19	The Highway Code should be revised and given the force of law	10
„	The Code should be presented in three separate forms, viz., for motorist, cyclist and pedestrian	„
„	The motorist's Highway Code should be given to him with his driving licence, the cyclist's when he registers his bicycle, and the pedestrian's should be distributed from door to door ...	„
„	The Codes should be attractively presented, should receive the maximum of publicity, and should be periodically revised	„

2. Speed Limit

20	The principle of a speed limit must be retained, but it should not be unnecessarily imposed	10
21	An universal speed limit should not be re-imposed	11
22	Restricted areas should be reduced in number or extent	11

3. Education and Propaganda

(I) EDUCATION

25	Young children should be grounded at home in good road behaviour, and instruction in road safety should form part of the school curriculum	12
26	The recommendations of the Griffith-Boscawen and Leishman Committees on Road Safety among school children should be adopted and actively carried out	12
27	Education of road users should be as thorough in private and public schools as in local authority schools	13

(II) PROPAGANDA

28	A department of Propaganda should be formed. It should be given a certain amount of independence, and should employ commercial experts. The Treasury should make an early and substantial grant for the purpose	13
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<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
30	The revision of the Highway Code should be entrusted to the proposed Department, and should form the basis of propaganda	14
„	Co-operation from the pulpit and cinemas should be sought ; broadcasting, signs, advertisement posters, pamphlets and lectures, etc., should also be employed ; local safety organisations should be formed	„
„	There should be active propaganda regarding the effect of alcohol on drivers	„
„	The advice of the police should be invoked, and the methods adopted by the Post Office and the National Campaign for Fitness might be followed	„
31	Good relations between all road users should be fostered by propaganda	14
32	Methods should be constantly varied	14

4. Police

33	The Police should carry on an extensive campaign of advice and assistance rather than of prosecution	15
34	The policy of motor patrols pursued by the Lancashire police should be followed throughout the kingdom	15
„	The Treasury should make a substantial grant to the Police for this purpose, in order to increase personnel, patrol vehicles, etc.	„
„	A combined effort should be made by the whole of the police personnel	16
35	“ Shock tactics ” should be employed for motor patrols, and patrolling should be in accordance with density of accidents at special times and places. Novelty and interest should be sustained	16
„	Roads with bad accident records should be black listed	„
36	Courtesy should continue to be an essential part of police training	16
„	Police vehicles, wireless control boxes, etc., should be labelled with police signs	„
„	Plain clothes policeman should not be employed for mobile patrol work	„
37	Prosecutions for offences in which there is no element of danger should be reduced to a minimum	16
„	Superintendents and inspectors should undergo advanced training in the motor patrol system	17

Paragraph.		Page
37	Training schools should be provided for teaching a large proportion of the police to drive ...	17
38	Police patrols should carry out special propaganda among motor cyclists, cyclists, etc. ...	17
„	Post Office should hand slips of warning to old age pensioners ...	„

5. Alcohol

1 39	A warning against alcohol even in moderate quantities should receive prominence in the Highway Code ...	17
2 „	Magistrates and their Clerks should be advised regarding the effect of alcohol on drivers ...	18
40 5	Courts should treat drivers who were under the influence of drink when an accident occurred with exemplary severity ...	18
9	Licences should be automatically endorsed or suspended on conviction for driving under the influence of drink... ..	„
3 41	Juries should be given clear directions as to the meaning of the phrase “under the influence of drink” ...	18
42	Blood tests for alcohol should be recognised, and arrangements should be made to carry them out on a voluntary basis ...	19

6. Insurance

43	No benefit under an insurance policy should accrue to persons convicted of grave road offences in respect of injury sustained by him or the vehicle driven by him, assuming it to be his property ...	19
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7. Further recommendations regarding conduct and control of road users

44	A round table conference of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians should be convened by the Minister of Transport in order to remove misunderstandings and promote road safety ...	20
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(I) ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW

50	Where numerous and apparently well-founded complaints of capricious sentences imposed by a particular Bench have been received, the Lord Chancellor should be empowered to take action ...	22
52	Regulations should be simplified and consolidated	23

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
53	Where a defendant admits a charge and is prepared to plead " Guilty," his attendance in Court and that of police witnesses should not be required	23
„	Where possible summonses should be served by post. The speed at which the defendant was alleged to have been travelling should be included in the charge	„
54	Courts should be empowered to take account of previous convictions in the defendant's absence provided a copy has been sent to him in advance, and is not challenged by him... ..	23
55	An offence of " causing death by negligent driving " should be substituted for a charge of " manslaughter "	24
„	Juries should have the alternative of finding persons charged with manslaughter guilty of " driving without due care and attention "	„
56	A Coroner should not investigate or make observations regarding responsibility for an accident	24
„	The Ministry of Transport should if possible send a representative to every inquest on a road fatality	„
57	Magistrates should have discretion to postpone the disqualification of drivers for forty-eight hours after conviction	24

(II) DRIVERS

59	" L " driving licences should be issued for a short period only... ..	25
„	A further " L " licence should not be issued for at least a year	„
„	The Court should be empowered to take away a provisional licence from a learner who was not driving with a licensed person	„
„	It should be compulsory that a learner should be accompanied by a person licensed to drive the same category of vehicle	„
60	Examiners of applicants for driving licences should pass an advanced test	25
61	Driving tests should be made more searching	25
„	The proposed Road Safety Research Board should investigate the methods followed by driving schools	„
62	Particular attention should be paid in driving tests to the correct use of the horn	26
63	"Stop" Lights and Direction Indicators on vehicles should be made a legal and sufficient signal	26

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
64	An application for a licence for a motor vehicle should be accompanied by policy covering same period	26
65	An application for a driving licence should be accompanied by an attestation and a photograph	26
„	Licensing authorities should be empowered to investigate the physical fitness and age of applicants and their familiarity with the Highway Code, including the warning against alcohol, and if necessary to order a new test before issuing or renewing driving licences... ..	„
„	A new driving licence should be issued only after a further test, if a year has elapsed since the applicant held a licence... ..	27
66	The possession of more than one licence should be treated with severity	27
67	Restraint should be exercised in suspending licences where the future livelihood of the driver may be prejudiced	27
„	Anyone driving with a suspended licence should be severely punished	„
„	Any person whose driving licence has been suspended should be required to pass a new driving test	„
68	Where the discretion not to endorse or suspend a driving licence is exercised the special reasons should be stated in open Court	27
69	There should be endorsement of driving licences in regard to all offences carrying increased sentences after previous convictions. Licences should be produced after conviction in order that the Court may determine the relevance of previous convictions	28
70	Accident-prone drivers should be disqualified ...	28
„	Insurance companies should refuse to insure accident-prone drivers	„
„	Persons who fail to disclose to an insurance company their previous relations with other insurance companies should be severely punished ..	„
„	Research in the detection of undesirable drivers might be undertaken by the proposed Road Safety Research Board	„

(III) PEDAL CYCLISTS

72	Children under 10 should be forbidden to cycle on the public roads	29
„	Proficiency badges should be issued to children by the local authority, empowering them to cycle on a public road	„
„	Parents should ensure that children's cycles are neither too big nor defective	„
„	Parents should ensure that their children are conversant with the Highway Code... ..	„
„	Local Authorities should share the above obligations	„
„	Education authorities should instruct children in road behaviour	30
73	Pedal cycles should be registered and should carry number plates	30
74	Cyclists should be compulsorily insured against third party risks	30
75	Cyclists should be compelled to report all accidents in which they are involved	30
76	Red rear lamps should be compulsory on all cycles	31
77	Bells should be compulsory on all cycles	31
78	It should be an offence for a cyclist to carry anything on his cycle which interferes with his control or with his view of the road	31
79	Cyclists should not be allowed to ride more than two abreast except when overtaking	31
80	The Minister of Transport should make it compulsory for every cycle to have two efficient brakes	32

(IV) PEDESTRIANS

84	For a pedestrian to enter the carriageway heedlessly should be an offence	33
85	Pedestrians should not be allowed to use cycle tracks	33
86	Pedestrians should be advised by notices and propaganda to keep to the left	33
87	Children under seven years of age should be more strictly controlled by their parents	34
88	More playgrounds and open spaces should be provided for children... ..	34
„	They should be open in the evening in congested districts	„
„	Certain streets should be reserved as playgrounds for children	„
89	Extra police should be stationed at crossings to assist school children to cross	34

PART II

ROADS

1. General

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
92	A vastly accelerated programme of road construction and improvement should be undertaken	36
93	A representative area for road improvements should be selected and subsidised by the Ministry of Transport	36
„	In this area intensified propaganda and the use of the motor patrol system should be carried on	„
94	A list should be kept showing the priority of improvement schemes	37
„	The Ministry of Transport should be empowered to insist on improvements which demand priority	„
95	Every Local Authority should keep traffic accident maps	37
96	Victims of accidents should be given a right of action against road authorities for failure to execute necessary road repairs	37
97	There should be complete co-ordination between those concerned in highway administration ...	38
98	More Class 1 Roads should be classified as Trunk Roads	38
„	Local authorities should consult together regarding the construction or improvement of Class 1 Roads	„
99	The control of arterial roads in London should be vested in a central authority	38
100	A senior police representative should be attached to the Ministry of Transport as Traffic Adviser	39
101	A Road Safety Research Board should be set up	39
„	The Board should be advisory, but it should issue reports recommending executive action ...	„
102	The Ministry of Transport should appoint road inspectors and more accident officers	39
103	Road inspectors should have duties analogous to those of factory inspectors, and some of them should visit other countries for purposes of investigation and report	40
104	More accident officers should be appointed ...	40
„	Accident officers should report all major road accidents, and they should investigate the contributory causes of these	„

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
104	Accident officers should report dangerous roads and black spots, and, if these are not remedied, the Minister should be empowered to order the sections of road in question to be closed ...	40

2. Autobahnen

111	The Committee would like to see an experimental motorway constructed	43
„	Road construction machinery in use abroad should be studied	44

3. Roads in Areas not Built Up

112	Where possible new by-passes and other roads should run alongside railway lines	44
„	Construction of all roads should follow the recommendations contained in Ministry of Transport memorandum 483	„
113	Improvement of existing roads and construction of new roads to be carried on simultaneously... ..	44
114	The improvement of rural lanes and unimportant side roads should not be given priority over work on major roads	44
115	Dual carriageways should be constructed wherever feasible	45
116	Where minor roads cross major roads they should be staggered	45
117	Circular islands or roundabouts should be constructed at all main crossroads	46
118	Only pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic signals and compulsory pedestrian signal lights should be placed on unrestricted roads. Alternatively, ramped bridges or subways should be constructed	46
119	Road surfaces should be improved and uniform, and they should be light in colour, particularly at bends, corners, crossroads and crossings	46
„	The use of wood paving should be discontinued	„
120	The Ministry of Transport should decide the priority between roads where one is a trunk road or a class 1 road	46
„	Traffic on roads accorded priority should by legislation be given precedence	„
„	“Halt” signs in areas not built-up should be reviewed, and, where not essential, removed	„
„	At junctions there should be a white line across the minor road	„

Paragraph.	Page
120 Signs on priority roads should be reduced to a minimum, and they should be of standard pattern	46
„ “ Blind Corner ” signs are necessary even on priority roads	„
121 Cycle tracks of adequate width and good surface should be constructed	47
„ The use of cycle tracks by pedal cyclists where satisfactory should be made compulsory except when turning	„
„ The level of the cycle track surface should prevail if entrances to carriage drives, houses, etc., are at a different level	„
„ Many rights of way, bridle paths and disused roads might be converted into cycle tracks ...	48
„ When roads are widened existing hedges should often be retained, and cycle tracks and footpaths put beyond them. When possible the tracks and footpaths should be taken behind petrol stations	„
122 Where a pedestrian is involved in an accident while using a carriageway beside which there is an adequate footpath his conduct in so doing should afford <i>prima facie</i> evidence of carelessness	48
„ Wherever possible footpaths with good surfaces should be provided	„
123 For important roads land of a minimum width of 300 feet should be acquired	49
„ Building frontages on main roads should be controlled and agreements sterilising the land should be made with the neighbouring owners	„
124 Cambering of roads should not be excessive ...	49
„ All corners on main roads should, if possible, be banked or superelevated... ..	„
125 White lines should be laid down and their use standardised. They might be marked by “ cat’s eyes ” at night	49
„ Important roads without dual carriageways should be divided by painted strips into two or four tracks	50
„ Division of roads into three tracks should be changed without delay	„
126 More fly-over junctions and tunnels should be provided	50
127 Process of elimination of blind corners should be accelerated	50
128 Kerbs should generally be abolished and replaced by guard posts	50

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
I28	Kerbs where they remain should be improved ...	50
I29	Safety posts should be erected where carriageways run parallel with rivers where no barriers exist	51
I30	All level crossings on main roads should be bridged or tunnelled	51
I31	Hump-back bridges should be abolished	51
I32	Road signs should be uniform and of the reflector type	51
„	Unnecessary and unauthorised road signs should be removed	„
I33	A green line might be painted across the left half of every road 100 yards before a road sign ...	51
I34	Sign-posting should be uniform and more efficient	51
I35	“Lay-byes” and “draw-ins” should be made on every few miles of highway, and the Ministry should contribute to their cost	52
I36	The removal of telegraph and telephone poles should be facilitated by legislation	53
„	Trees in many cases should be removed	„
I37	Lighting of important highways should be controlled by one overhead authority	53
I38	Lighting-up time should be reviewed	53
I39	Failure of two or more slow-moving lorries to allow sufficient space between them to enable an overtaking motorist to pass in safety should be made an offence	53
I40	All drivers should be bound to drive on the left hand side of the road, and to give way to traffic coming up on the right side. Drivers of vehicles other than cycles should overtake on right hand side	53

4. Roads in Built-up Areas

I41	The recommendations of the Bressey Report should, where feasible, receive effect. Similar reports should be made for other large cities ...	54
I43	Pedestrian lights should be provided at dangerous crossings	55
„	Compliance with them should be obligatory ...	„
„	Other traffic signals should not be shielded in such a manner that pedestrians desiring to cross cannot see them	„
„	The <i>onus</i> of proving negligence should be on a pedestrian who is involved in an accident while crossing the street near but not on a crossing ...	„
„	Clearer instructions should be issued as to the rights and obligations of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the various types of crossing ...	„

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
144	Pedestrian crossing beacons should be illuminated at night	55
„	Pedestrian crossings should, where feasible, be provided with at least one island rest	„
„	Where a street is wide enough for four lines of traffic there should be three island rests at each crossing	„
„	On each island rest there should be a bollard, illuminated at night	„
„	It should be made illegal to overtake at pedestrian crossings	56
145	Steel studs at pedestrian crossings should be replaced by “cats eyes”	56
„	Coloured plates should be laid over the surface of pedestrian crossings	„
146	More guard rails should be erected, and a large percentage of their cost paid for by the Ministry of Transport	56
„	Openings in guard rails for omnibus passengers should be provided	„
„	At controlled pedestrian crossings, bars to hold back pedestrians should be provided at the gaps in the guard rails	„
„	Guard rails should be erected outside entrances to schools on main thoroughfares	„
147	More ramped subways and bridges should be erected	57
148	Dangerous parking places should be abolished	57
„	There should be a limit of time for vehicles waiting in the street	„
„	Generally speaking only unilateral waiting should be allowed	„
„	Adequate parking grounds must be provided with- in central areas	„
„	Parking at corners and on crests of hills, etc., should be penalised	58
„	Parking near a pedestrian crossing should be forbidden	„
„	Leaving a car on the wrong side of the road at night should be an offence	„
149	Street lighting should be made uniform, in particular on Trunk and Class I roads	58
„	There should be one lighting authority	„
„	The opinion of the police on street lighting should be sought	„
150	The powers recommended by the Departmental Committee on traffic signs should be conferred without delay	59

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
150	Red or green lights for advertisement purposes in close proximity to the carriageway should be made illegal unless approved by the highway authority	59
151	Street names and directions should be more legible and uniform	59
	Unnecessary street signs should be eliminated	„
152	Traffic signal lights should be larger and lower than at present	59
153	A flexible progressive system of traffic control should be organised on thoroughfares leaving large towns... ..	59
154	Halt signs should be adequately lit, and should be placed either on both sides of the street or, where possible, on an obelisk in the centre of the street	60
155	The cost of removing dangerous electric light standards should be laid by statute on the undertakers	60
156	Control of public service vehicle stops should be vested in the Chief Officer of Police, with the right of appeal to the Traffic Commissioners ...	60
„	Public service vehicle stops should be sited as close as is consonant with safety to pedestrian crossings	„
157	Ring arterial roads should be provided for large towns	60
158	Alternative routes for cyclists should be indicated	61
159	Service roads should be constructed on large thoroughfares	61
160	Town planning authorities should plan areas from the traffic point of view. Cinemas, etc., should be sited inside building estates, and new schools should not abut on main traffic routes	61
161	More traffic signs should be placed on side streets	61
162	Tramway lines should be removed as soon as they cease to be used	62
„	When possible trolley vehicles should be substituted for tramways	„
163	Wooden setts should be carpeted with non-skid material, in particular near pedestrian crossings	62
164	When rebuilding, Local Authorities should insist on arcaded pavements where practicable ...	62
165	Regional committees should be formed to devise improvements and to encourage uniformity ...	62

PART III

VEHICLES

General

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
168	The problem of improvements for vehicles in the interests of safety should be considered by the proposed Road Safety Research Board...	63

1. Motor Vehicles

169	On the sale of a second-hand motor vehicle a certificate of fitness should be issued, in particular with regard to its brakes	64
170	The police should be empowered to examine the brakes of any vehicle	64
„	Brake testing machines should be instituted ...	„
„	The owner should be subject to a fine if there be brake efficiency of less than 30 per cent. ...	„
171	Doors should be hinged at the front or made to slide	65
„	It should be an offence to open the off-side door carelessly	„
172	The near-side wing should be visible from the driver's seat	65
„	A driver should be able to look over the steering wheel	„
173	Strident horns should not be permitted. The Ministry of Transport should make a regulation prohibiting their advertisement	65
174	Research into the question of lighting, and in particular into the prevention of dazzle should be made by the proposed Department of Scientific Research	65
„	The police should be empowered to inspect the dipping mechanism. Use of that mechanism should be made compulsory	„
„	The position of obligatory lights should be standardised	„
„	Side lights should have a red lens at the back and a red lens on the outside of the near-side lamp, and a green lens on the outside of the off-side lamp	„
„	Lighting on commercial vehicles should be improved	„
„	Indication of the breadth of commercial vehicles should be given by two side lights and two rear lights. They should carry traffic indicators ...	„

<i>Paragraph.</i>		<i>Page</i>
174	The presence of a trailer should be marked in front and behind	65
„	Trams should carry stop lights	„

2. Pedal Cycles

175	Cycles should conform to a standard of fitness	66
„	Efficient brakes should be required by regulations enforceable by the police... ..	„
„	The employer should be prosecuted where an employee is found using a pedal cycle with inadequate brakes	„
„	A use and construction order for cycles should be made by the Ministry of Transport	„
176	Handlebars should not be too low, nor should the saddle be too high... ..	66



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